

THE EMERGENCE OF GLOBAL MAOISM

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CHINA'S RED EVANGELISM
AND THE CAMBODIAN COMMUNIST
MOVEMENT, 1949–1979

MATTHEW GALWAY

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In his book *Danse Macabre* (2010, 89), Stephen King wrote one of the most resonant passages that I have ever encountered in my years. Never one to consider myself an excellent author or scholarly mind, I took solace in knowing

that hard work was the determining factor between success and failure. King's words thus ring true:

Writers are made, not born or created out of dreams or childhood trauma—that becoming a writer (or a painter, actor, director, dancer, and so on) is a direct result of conscious will. Of course there has to be some talent involved, but talent is a dreadfully cheap commodity, cheaper than table salt. What separates the talented individual from the successful one is a lot of hard work and study; a constant process of honing. Talent is a dull knife that will cut nothing unless it is wielded with great force—a force so great that the knife is not really cutting at all but bludgeoning and breaking (and after two or three of these gargantuan swipes it may succeed in breaking itself . . .). Discipline and constant work are the whetstones upon which the dull knife of talent is honed until it becomes sharp enough, hopefully, to cut through even the toughest meat and gristle. No writer, painter, or actor—no *artist*—is ever handed a sharp knife (although a few people are handed almighty big ones; the name we give to the artist with the big knife is “genius”), and we hone with varying degrees of zeal and aptitude.

ABBREVIATIONS

AACC	China-Cambodia Friendship Association (Association d’Amitié Chinois-Cambodgien / Jian-Zhong youhao xiehui)
AAKC	Khmer-Chinese Friendship Association (Association d’Amitié khmero-chinoise / Samāgam Mittphāp Khmer-Chin / Gaomian-Zhongguo youhao xiehui)
AEK	Khmer Students’ Association (Association des Étudiants Khmères)
AGEK	General Association of Khmer Students (Association Générale des Étudiants Khmères / Samāgam Nissit Khmer)
BAEK	Khmer Student (Bulletin de l’Association des étudiants Khmers / <i>Khemara Nissit</i>)
BOCPO	Battambang Overseas Chinese Party Organization (Madewang qiao dangzuzhi)
CCP	Chinese Communist Party (Zhongguo Gongchandang)
CPK	Communist Party of Kampuchea (Paks Kummuyñst Kampuchea)
DK	Democratic Kampuchea (Kampuchea Prajādhipteyy)
FAC	Foreign Affairs Committee (Waishi Weiyuanhui)
FLP	Foreign Languages Press (Waiwen chubanshe)
FUNK	National United Front of Kampuchea (Front uni national du Kampuchéa / Raṇasirs Ruopruomjāti Kampuchea)
GMD	Chinese Nationalist Party (Zhongguo Guomindang)

GRUNK	Royal Government of the National Union of Kampuchea (Gouvernement royal d'union nationale du Kampuchéa / Rājraṭhābhipāl Ruopruomjāti Kampuchea)
IB	International Bookstore (Guoji tushu)
ICP	Indochinese Communist Party (Gaṇapaks Kummuyñīst Īṇḍūcin)
ILD	International Liaison Department of the CCP Central Committee (Zhongguo gongchandang zhongyang duiwai lianluo)
KPRP	Khmer People's Revolutionary Party (Gaṇapaks Prajājan Paṭivatt Kampuchea)
MHRB	Sino-Khmer Daily (Mianhua ribao) [Cambodia]
NPSS	New People's Study Society (Xinmin xuehui)
PCF	French Communist Party (Parti communiste français)
PLA	People's Liberation Army (Zhongguo Renmin Jiefangjun)
PMTI	Guangzhou Peasant Movement Training Institute (Guangzhou nongmin yundong jiangxisuo)
PRC	People's Republic of China
PSC	Popular Socialist Community (Saṅgam Rāstr Niyam)
RMRB	People's Daily (Renmin ribao)
SCA	School of Cambodian Arts (École des Arts Cambodgiens)
SEM	Socialist Education Movement (Shehuizhuyi jiaoyu yundong)
SONEXIM	National Company of Import and Export (Société Nationale d'Exportation et d'Importation)
UEK	Khmer Students Union (Union des Étudiants Khmers)
WPK	Worker's Party of Kampuchea (Gaṇapaks Balakar Kampuchea)
WPV	Worker's Party of Vietnam

NOTE ON LANGUAGES

This book employs the Pinyin system of romanization in all cases except in instances when a Wade-Giles romanization is the standard. For historical figures whose names have been generally romanized in Wade-Giles, such as Chiang Kai-shek and Sun Yat-sen, I use the widely used standard. The same is true for place-names such as Hong Kong and Taipei. This also applies to those rare cases below in direct quotes or references that employ Wade-Giles.

Khmer does not use a standard romanized system. Many Cambodia scholars have used the Franco-Khmer method or a hybrid system, and rarely are two alike. I have instead followed Ian Harris in using the Saveros Lewitz transliteration system (1969) of rendering Khmer terms in Roman characters, as Lewitz modeled it on the transliteration of Pāli and Sanskrit. I have done so in all cases except for in quoted material or when names and organizations have a standard usage. In the case of *Angkar* (Organization) and Prachaeon and for figures and place-names whose usage has been standardized, including Norodom Sihanouk and Pol Pot, Phnom Penh and Pursat, I have maintained the popular transliteration.

The glossary of selected key terms lists all names in their English/romanized spelling first, then in their respective romanizations, and, finally, in original characters. For the glossary of selected key terms in Chinese, I use traditional characters because of familiarity and my own intensive training in Taiwan. Unless noted otherwise, or in quoted material from English-language scholarship, all translations from French, Chinese, and Khmer are my own.

THE EMERGENCE OF GLOBAL MAOISM

Introduction

Perhaps the ultimate key of Maoism is that as a cultural phenomenon, it provides a comfortable place in which everyone can invest what he or she pleases. That is the reason why it appears in such heterogeneous fashion from one country to another. . . . Maoism does not exist. It has never existed. That is no doubt the explanation for its success.

—Christophe Bourseiller, *Les Maoïstes*

In a speech to commemorate the 120th anniversary of Mao Zedong's birth, the general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), Xi Jinping, encouraged members to carry on the enduring spirit of Mao Zedong Thought (known internationally as Maoism).¹ Xi heralded Mao's roles as the CCP's ideological steward and founder of the People's Republic of China (PRC), whose thought was included in the 1975 PRC constitution along with the writings of epoch-defining revolutionary political theorists Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin. In the speech, Xi emphasized three pillars of Mao Zedong Thought that he interpreted as applying particularly to China. The first, "to seek truth from facts" (*shishi qiushi*), originally from the *Book of Han* (111 CE),² refers to Mao's call for pragmatism in 1938 at the CCP's Sixth National Congress. The second, "the mass line" (*qunzhong luxian*), recalls the CCP's methodology of encouraging cadres to listen to the masses and address their concerns. Although the third, "socialism with Chinese characteristics," borrows from a 1981 resolution of the Deng Xiaoping era, Xi associates it with Mao's assessment that China was in the initial stage of socialist development.³

After listing these pillars, Xi further stated that "there is no such thing in the world as a development model that can be applied universally, nor is there any development path that remains carved in stone. The diversity of historical conditions determines the diversity of the development paths chosen by

various countries.”⁴ Xi’s claim that Chinese socialism is solely its own was remarkable because his government had been expanding the Belt and Road Initiative, a transnational development strategy to connect China to the rest of the world. Four years later, he averred, “Global growth requires new drivers, development needs to be more inclusive and balanced, and the gap between the rich and the poor needs to be narrowed. . . . We are ready to share practices of development with other countries, but we have no intention to interfere in other countries’ internal affairs, export our own social system and model of development, or impose our own will on others.”⁵

Xi’s claims about the pillars of Mao Zedong Thought, which he later identified as crucial to China’s success, were universal maxims applicable to any Communist movement in Mao’s time. But despite Xi’s departure from the message of his ideological forebears, his speech revived discussions of how local ideas become global ideological phenomena with varied forms of indigenization.⁶ Through creative adaptation, which Mao himself encouraged, one could—and Maoists outside China did—apply Maoism to one’s own national struggles and historical situations.⁷ Xi’s speech also raises the question at the heart of this book: If China’s leadership regarded Mao Zedong Thought as a global ideology rather than as a particularistic strategy, what happened to it when it traveled outside China?

An important case study of Maoism outside China, although one scholars have glossed over, is Cambodia. Intellectuals who became leading ministers of the Maoist Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK, or Khmer Rouge)—the “Paris Group” of Saloth Sâr (a.k.a. Pol Pot, 1925–1998),⁸ Hou Yuon (1930–1975), and Hu Nim (1932–1977)—all gravitated toward Maoism because of its global applicability (see figure I.1). In particular, they regarded the CCP’s experience of a peasant revolution as suitable for their own endeavors. Even those Cambodian radicals who later rejected Maoism, most notably future CPK general secretary Pol Pot, who prioritized an apparent road to pure socialism once in power, were actually very Maoist in so doing—just as Mao broke with the Soviet model of authoritarian total governance and subsequently implemented his Chinese road to socialism.

Because the story of Cambodian Maoism remains untold, this book blends genealogy with intellectual history to uncover the processes whereby Cambodian intellectuals engaged with and adapted Mao Zedong Thought. It maps this ideological genealogy to explore the social context of knowledge and to uncover how Maoism was conjoined with local ideologies. Through textual exegesis and analyses of the political practices of these Maoists, I argue that the future CPK ministers responded much like Mao before them to political and socioeconomic crises by engaging with radical thought dialectically.⁹ Pol



FIGURE I.1. Head of State Norodom Sihanouk (*far right*) presiding over the inaugural meeting of the Royal Government of National Union of Kampuchea (GRUNK), headed by CPK leaders, in the interior during his 1973 inspection tour of the liberated zone. CPK minister of interior, rural reform, and cooperatives Hou Yuon is seated third from the left. CPK minister of information and propaganda Hu Nim is third from the right. CPK general secretary Pol Pot is seated to the left of Hu Nim. From a special issue of *China Pictorial*, no. 6 (1973). *Public domain*.

Pot, Yuon, and Nim *spoke back* to Maoism by adapting it through practice without abandoning its universality (in its Russian or its Chinese accretions),¹⁰ which stood as a global model for waging national revolution and socialist transformation.¹¹ Writings by Paris Group members that wrestled with Maoism provide examples of how engagements with Maoism helped and hindered Cambodia's efforts to cope with the intense pressures of economic, industrial, and political modernization.

Although initially apolitical students when they sailed for Paris to acquire the skills needed to liberate, and then reform, their homeland, Pol Pot, Yuon, and Nim were radicalized in the cosmopolitan French capital and became card-carrying members of the French Communist Party. Each wrote foundational national texts that, to varying degrees and in different ways, framed the Maoist experiment that became the state of Democratic Kampuchea from 1975 to 1979. Over the course of their studies and political careers, the future CPK intellectual thrust came to regard Maoism as an alternative modernity for Third World peoples in a movement against imperialist hegemony. The process whereby Maoism inspired a collective conscience, as reflected in individual

thought and community action, ultimately helps explain more fully how the CPK movement played out as it did.

In the same way that Mao Zedong Thought resulted from the Sinification of Marxism (Marxism-Leninism), Cambodia's revolutionary intellectuals "Kampucheanized" Maoism. But localized Maoism emerged primarily in progressive intellectual exchanges a decade before the Paris Group's first visits to China. Before their immersion in the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist canon, Pol Pot, Yuon, and Nim had little knowledge of China. In his first political essay, "Monarchy or Democracy?" (1952),¹² Pol Pot discussed the Chinese revolution of 1911 as a watershed moment in the worldwide people's movement for democracy. Yuon and Nim engaged with Maoist political economy in their respective 1955 and 1965 French-language doctoral dissertations as part of their framing of a new Cambodian agricultural sector.¹³ When these men returned to Cambodia in the 1950s, they applied what they had learned in Paris, and each gradually and differently transformed into a Maoist peasant visionary. Thus the CPK's national democratic revolution of 1967–1975 represented the adaptation of Mao's United Front policies as understood by the two CPK members with the most sophisticated understanding of Maoism—Yuon and Nim.¹⁴

Upon seizing state power after a brutal civil war (1967–1975), Pol Pot held the view, at least rhetorically and officially, that the CPK's "friends around the world" could find value in its revolutionary experience. As a self-proclaimed proletarian-led party, it had drafted its political line "upon Marxism-Leninism and the principles of independence, sovereignty, and self-reliance" while "applying Marxism-Leninism to the concrete realities of Kampuchea and Kampuchean society." He averred that Kampuchea would "stand on the side of the revolutionary people of the world" and that upholding its political line was an important, albeit minor, "contribution to the revolutionary movements of the world's people in the struggle for national liberation."¹⁵

The following analysis offers three distinct contributions to the study of global Maoism in general and of Cambodian Maoism in particular. The first contribution is methodological. The analysis presents an intellectual and political genealogy of Maoism in China and then looks at its globalization thereafter. The framework is a version of Edward Said's "traveling theory,"¹⁶ which applies to the same processes that led to the Paris Group's development of Cambodian Maoism, thus contributing to a fuller understanding of radical thought and the processes whereby ideas travel across cultures. The second contribution is historiographical. The analysis recenters the Paris Group of Maoist intellectuals as instrumental figures in framing Democratic Kampuchea. In so doing, this book sheds overdue light on their intellectual engagement with radical thought in 1950s Paris and on their pursuance of progressive

policies during their political careers in Cambodia. The third contribution is interpretive. Because the theory of Cambodian Maoism differed so much from its praxis in Democratic Kampuchea as “Kampucheanized” Maoism, the analysis tracks its transformation from 1975 to 1979 and suggests how to think freshly about Mao and Maoism *after* Mao, particularly concerning his lasting global influence even to this day.

Global Maoism as a Traveling Ideological System

After decades of the Soviet Union’s influence, China gradually left its orbit after Joseph Stalin’s death in 1953. The CCP response to the 1956 Polish and Hungarian crises was to “adopt a more aggressive agenda on promoting China’s ‘socialist revolution and reconstruction.’” After uniting China and consolidating party rule, CCP leaders set their sights on fomenting “Eastern revolution” and fostering new alliances with Communist and nonaligned states in Asia.¹⁷ At the Afro-Asian Conference held in Indonesia in 1955, the CCP’s representative, senior statesman Zhou Enlai, advanced a nonaligned movement in an attempt to de-Stalinize PRC foreign policy. The CCP reoriented its foreign relations toward building connections in the developing world by sending supplies and technical advisers and by sponsoring cultural diplomacy through arts, student exchanges, and friendship associations.¹⁸ Progressives and military leaders in these countries developed a deeper interest in the PRC, with many visitors gravitating toward Maoist theory because it presented a practical program for waging revolution and socialist transition.

It was not a stretch for the CCP to lend support to Communist movements, as it was congruent with Beijing’s policy of promoting Eastern revolution and world Communism. CCP international diplomacy did succeed in combining, on the one hand, its endorsement of the nonaligned (or non-Communist) national governments of newly independent nations and, on the other hand, its support for the fledgling Communist movements that sought to overthrow them. By seeking to cast imperialism out of Asia and replace it with Asian independence in the global sphere, the CCP demonstrated that China was the most important ally of national anti-imperial struggles and the rightful leader of the global Communist movement.

However, CCP support of nonaligned countries through the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (*heping gongchu wuxiang yuanze*) presented the major problem of how to support Communist movements while encouraging neutrality and autonomous socialist development by leaders whom the CCP had deemed anti-Communist.¹⁹ This dilemma arose in Cambodia. Initially,

Chinese leaders and propaganda lauded the neutral stance of Cambodia's head of state, Norodom Sihanouk. But by the mid-1960s, as Sihanouk suppressed leftist activities in Cambodia, the same CCP figures secretly supported Cambodia's Communist movement against him, and party-sponsored Chinese-language newspapers encouraged enthusiasm for the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) among overseas Chinese (*huaqiao*).

During Cambodia's global 1960s, Cambodians developed a China curiosity. French Communist Party initiatives in translation through its principal publishing house, Social Editions (*Les Éditions sociales*), of Mao's works from Russian translations of Chinese originals made Mao's writings readily available to Cambodian students in Paris in the early to mid-1950s and in Phnom Penh at the end of the decade.²⁰ In the 1960s, CCP-sponsored translation and mass dissemination of Mao's works brought Mao Zedong Thought to a global audience, including Cambodia. By the middle of the decade, Cultural Revolution-style fervor captured Phnom Penh, where an urban radical culture developed in parallel with the ongoing maelstrom of social upheaval in China. *Huaqiao* held demonstrations outside the Soviet embassy and elsewhere, soldiers sported Mao badges, and Chinese-language newspapers frequently published Cultural Revolution propaganda. Chinese aid experts distributed "freely available" copies of *Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong* (1966), which "abounded among high school students and younger Buddhist monks."²¹ Cambodian students mimicked the infamous Red Guards (*hong weibing*) in "posting large wall posters that criticized the Sihanouk government." Some local Chinese teachers in the capital even taught Mao Zedong Thought in high school until Sihanouk's government threatened to shutter Chinese community-run schools for these actions.²²

Ideological System

Ideology acts as a meeting ground between social reality and how people receive, understand, and subsequently act on that reality. Ideology becomes a system not merely because it fills a void in interpretation or is realized through practice, but also because it fulfills a social need that unifies otherwise disparate strata of ordinary people who may lay down their lives to accomplish extraordinary feats together.²³ Mao's written texts, his thought, and the institutions that he envisioned and established in China constituted an ideological system that radicals outside China adopted and applied in their homelands—in this case, Cambodia.²⁴ Maoism's capacity for effectiveness lies in its very nature as a whole package that is, at once, a critical interpretive paradigm, an

ideological discourse, a radical “vocabulary” and “syntax” for waging political struggle, and a strategy for fighting protracted war.²⁵ Its inherent emancipatory aspects—its program for autonomous socialist transition and its inclusionary stress on collective movement and peasant guerrilla warfare, the latter of which was a principal strategy of the CCP Revolution—made it possible for radicals everywhere, and from all walks of life, to recognize something in Maoism because of its malleability and the flexibility of its interpretation. Such radicals regarded Maoism as a suitable fit for their movement and, in some cases, as a magic weapon (*da fabao*) sent from heaven to aid national struggle.

Importantly, Maoism acknowledges realities that earlier adaptations of Marxism do not. French Egyptian Maoist economist Samir Amin (1931–2018), who was a mentor of Pol Pot’s lieutenant, Khieu Samphan (b. 1931), described Maoism as recognizing that the “worker-peasant alliance and de-linking from the world capitalist system are the substantive and inextricably intertwined strategic conditions of the socialist transition in the imperialist epoch.”²⁶ It speaks to the issues of underdevelopment and cyclical dependency that intellectuals in the postindependence Global South like Yuon and Nim wrestled with for much of their lives. Most of all, Maoism constitutes a “political phenomenon that is valuable in itself . . . a series of political practices and intellectual attitudes that, while similar and connected to the Chinese experience, were also specifically situated.”²⁷ Therein lies Maoism’s greatest value to world revolution, one that has spurred renewed interest in the phenomenon of global Maoism not as a merely convenient catchall but as a profoundly rich and multilayered conceptual terrain.

Not unlike Xi’s claim that there are no universal norms, there exists no single textbook model for addressing the problem of explaining the complex inner workings of transnational exchanges of ideas and concepts such as Maoism. The result is a debate across various disciplines on how to best approach the problem in a way that sheds light on how traveling ideas interact with different contexts, becoming modified and reborn as revived wholes. Some valiant efforts undertaken by scholars to address the problem do exist, and at root, each approach wrestles with how ideas move across time and space and with the significance of ideas moving to new locales.²⁸ Although such approaches provide useful analytical tools, questions remain if one applies them to the cases under analysis. For instance, how did Mao Zedong and the Paris Group, all of whom had advantages that were largely inaccessible to their constituents, position themselves simultaneously as people of ideas, peasant saviors, and radical reformers?

Theory, Approaches, and Models

This book follows the structure and historical consequences of what Edward Said calls “traveling theory” to discuss how these intellectual and ideological changes played out on the ground. For Said, traveling theory comprises processes of production, transmission (or export), and reception.²⁹ To the reception stage, I introduce the problems of impact-relational reception, historical conditions of reception, and practical reception; to the wholly new stage of adaptation, I introduce the problems of intellectual, practical, and normative adaptations; and to another additional stage, that of implementation, I introduce the problems of consolidation, economic reconfiguration, and social transformation (or revolutionary perpetuation). In focusing on production (or the emergence of Mao Zedong Thought from Marxism-Leninism), on transmission (or CCP exports of Maoism to the world), and on reception (or Maoism among foreign Communists), I show how the CPK intellectuals approached Maoism and, eventually, “Kampucheanized” it. I also highlight how they subsequently implemented this Maoism in Democratic Kampuchea.

For the subsidiary problems of reception and adaptation in the expanded model, a helpful primer is an understanding of how intellectuals normalize ideas from without in their respective polities and then mobilize them to speak to status societies in their home countries. Philip Kuhn’s study of the origins of the Taiping Rebellion (1850–1864) identifies three salient steps to this process: (1) the precise language of the textual material that impinged on a host culture, (2) the structure of the historical circumstances in which this material emerged, and (3) the process whereby foreign materials became important to, and were made normative by, sectors of society outside the group that initially appreciated and received the materials.³⁰ These steps are important because each intellectual under analysis encountered leftist materials in Chinese or French translation, in cosmopolitan settings, and against the backdrop of significant events that staged their moments as global ones. Thereafter, Mao and the Paris Group engaged with their newfound ideas, wrestled with them intellectually, and then applied these adaptations to rally the marginalized for mass movements.

Kenneth Jowitt’s thesis that Leninist organizations combine charismatic-impersonal with rational-bureaucratic (or status-classificatory) ways of exercising power—Max Weber’s “modes of domination”³¹—allows us to understand the methods whereby an adapted theory is put into practice by a regime tinged by outside ideology. A Leninist party, he notes, may constitute a “novel” synthesis of charismatic, traditional, and modern forms of political authority. However, Leninist organizations’ synthesis of charismatic-impersonal and

rational-bureaucratic authority renders Leninism at once a “conflictual yet effective amalgam of charismatic impersonalism” and a “particular response to the status organization of peasant society and the related phenomenon of dependency.”³² Charisma speaks to the masses, whereas rational rules organize the leadership group. A millenarian party led by elites can mobilize peasants and run scientific facilities and research by combining these two often contradictory types of authority under duress and total warfare. Jowitt’s analytical categories help us understand how this novel combination of authority pulled traditional societies into modern societies and how they went wrong. His categories also allow us to track how Maoism in the CCP and CPK party centers underwent similar schisms in which charismatic and rational-bureaucratic strands of “charismatic impersonalism” ultimately split under the pressures of governing in the new countries, rending the leadership of the parties along charismatic and bureaucratic lines.³³

However, Jowitt’s distinction between charismatic and bureaucratic forms of political authority does not have to be dichotomic. Its usefulness lies in characterizing different phases of Maoism as either predominantly rational-bureaucratic, where ideology is a way to implement the leader’s ideas, or predominantly faith-oriented, where ideology is framed as faith in the leader’s charismatic authority. Undoubtedly, bureaucratic Maoism comprises sets of policies and decisions shaped by a much larger collective of CCP leaders and others in dialogue with the Soviet example. Faith-oriented Maoism was also the brainchild of CCP figures alongside Mao. There was plenty of bureaucracy in the faith-oriented Maoism of the 1960s and plenty of faith in the rational-bureaucratic Maoism of the preceding decade.³⁴ For the Cambodian radicals, rational-bureaucratic Maoism incorporated Mao’s socioeconomic analyses and, later, involved implementing a pragmatic form of revolution based on a class-wide united front. In the pages that follow, Jowitt’s distinction functions primarily as an explanatory tool that does not elide historical complexities.

The Sociology of Intellectuals and the Making of Charismatic Revolutionaries

How do we go from ideological journeys to political action? By looking at the sociology of intellectuals, this book explores the dynamic among ideological exploration, social experience, culture, and the pursuit of political power. It does not treat Pol Pot, Hou Yuon, or Hu Nim, all peasant intellectuals turned visionaries, as idealistic patriots or reformers who sought foreign ideologies only for national liberation and social transformation. Instead, an approach that considers the sociology of intellectuals is useful to explain why young

intellectual patriots and social reformers (not mutually exclusive) in Cambodia turned into radical nationalists, hardened Communists, and in some cases, brutal killers of not only their nation but also their comrades once they had state power in their hands.

Edward Said provides the best working approach to intellectuals for our study. He holds that the intellectual is “a representative figure that matters—someone who visibly represents a standpoint of some kind, and someone who makes articulate representations to his or her public despite all sorts of barriers. . . . Intellectuals are individuals with a vocation for the art of representing, whether that is talking, writing, teaching, appearing on television. And that vocation is important to the extent that it is publicly recognizable and involves both commitment and risk, boldness and vulnerability.”³⁵ Per his description, intellectuals are in the business of representation, and they balance commitment, risk, and vulnerability to considerable degrees throughout their careers, with some even willing to die (as they have) for their principles.

This book regards intellectuals like Mao and the Paris Group as, at once, class bound and free to transcend class. In predominantly agrarian societies like those of China and Cambodia, these intellectuals had transnational networks that they fostered during study away from home. Their experiences while sojourning and studying acquainted them with “opposing tendencies in social realities,” notably languages, vocabularies, and critical interpretive paradigms, thus enabling them “to attach themselves to classes to which they originally did not belong” and thereby “to choose their affiliation.”³⁶ The corpus of writings by Mao and the Paris Group intellectuals Yuon and Nim reveals serious engagement with Marxist concepts, an emphasis on collective work and mass movements, and radical proposals for the reorientation of society and the economy to address rural realities.

Each man, as grounded in his class, also “struggle[d] against the forms of power in relation to which he was both object and instrument: within the domain of ‘knowledge,’ ‘truth,’ ‘consciousness,’ and ‘discourse.’”³⁷ Mao and Pol Pot were from wealthy peasant families, whereas Yuon and Nim came from Cambodia’s poorest strata. Yet despite their varied upbringings, albeit in similarly rural surroundings, each intellectual’s role was nevertheless as a revolutionary force. Members of the Paris Group, for one, marshaled their education into charismatic oration and toward modernities of a newer vintage. Yuon and Nim wrote about, and during their political careers fought for, a reorientation of the rural sector around improving peasants’ standards of living. Mao and Pol Pot situated themselves on the front lines of guerrilla struggles to seize state power and developed their reputations as charismatic orators and would-be cosmocrats.

By dint of their educational training and the fact that their thinking was situated within rural origins, they all represented, in their own ways, “cogs in the power/knowledge machine” and therefore were able to “expose and disable it.”³⁸ But once they became the power/knowledge machine, differing interpretations and approaches to implementation led some intellectuals to turn against those with whom they had envisioned their new societies. Outspoken and critical, Yuon and Nim came into conflict with their Paris Group comrade, Pol Pot, and found themselves on the wrong side of his ire in 1975 and 1977, respectively.

In approaching Maoism as an ideological system, one can see that it was the most effective strategy for appealing to the very base that these leaders needed to reform their country. As their homeland’s major socioeconomic national crises pushed them to seek truth and to find solutions in foreign ideologies, they discovered Marxism-Leninism and subsequently Maoism, engaging with such radical thought first intellectually in a localized way and then practically upon occupying political posts back home.

The CPK intellectuals transcended class in their transformation into peasant visionaries because of one crucial yet oft-overlooked element: charisma. The central role of charisma in Cambodian leadership is especially useful here, as it explains the process whereby educated elites penetrated a society to which they had little or no *a priori* exposure.³⁹ For Max Weber, charisma and tradition are antithetical; charisma “calls for revolution,” whereas tradition demands “conservation.”⁴⁰ The former influences action because of the personal authority of the individual, whereas the latter inspires others because of status or because of the inertia of the status quo. A sociological view of intellectuals and a focus on the role of charisma provide for a fuller understanding of how these radical intellectuals rallied support from across the socioeconomic spectrum and positioned themselves as true interpreters of their respective national pasts and futures. Their personal charisma allowed them to couch foreign materials in the very real issues that peasants and workers faced in their daily struggles, and it earned Mao and Pol Pot positions as supreme theorists and interpreters of their respective revolutionary histories.

Global Maoism(s): Scholarly Approaches to Mao and His Thought

Among many Chinese, including ranking CCP members, Mao remains a polarizing figure. Some hold him in high regard as the national father and hero

of the Chinese people. One can deny neither the human toll of the Great Leap Forward (1958–1962) nor the violent iconoclasm of the Cultural Revolution, outcomes for which Mao was largely responsible. Yet Mao's errors do not prove that his thought was ineffective or unimportant.⁴¹ The most challenging task in the study of Maoism begins not with the man's flaws and disastrous programs but with his thought—its nature, form, and effect.⁴²

This book treats Mao's texts as a record of Maoism's development from Marxism-Leninism as Sinified by Mao to address the concrete realities of China into a complex ideological system with worldwide applicability. It holds that neither Mao nor Maoism exists in abstraction or singularity. Mao as a revolutionary, cosmocrat, reformer, and symbol traveled to, and resonated in, locales far beyond China's bounds and at different times in history. Different Maos and Maoisms resonated for different reasons, and as the Cambodia case shows, this phenomenon occurred simultaneously within the same movement.

In making this argument, this book joins work by Timothy Cheek, Nick Knight, and Arif Dirlik that approaches Mao and his thought as "pluralizations" (*duoyuanhua*). Cheek has observed that because "multiple Maos" exist, to foreground only "one dominant image is to distort the whole."⁴³ The Mao of the 1920s, who worked in the Nationalist Party (GMD) to promote proletarian revolution, is not identical to the Mao in the Jiangxi hills, who had to wage a rural revolution, or to the Mao of the 1950s, who tried to shift from revolution to governance. Just as multiple Maos exist, so too do multiple Maoisms.⁴⁴ The Mao Zedong Thought of Mao's Yan'an canon won him CCP leadership and provided the theoretical basis and strategy that underpinned the movement's push for state power. As implemented by the CCP, Mao Zedong Thought differed again, this time as a set of the party's policies in action—and it was to change again after these policies failed. Multiple Maos and Maoisms do not mean that there was incoherence between earlier and later incarnations. Instead, recognizing Mao and Maoism as pluralizations allows us to appreciate those aspects of both that radicals outside China identified with, wrestled with, and mobilized in their own movements.

In taking Mao's Marxism and his theoretical contributions to it seriously (but not uncritically) as they appear in the texts, this book also follows a precedent established by Knight, who argues that Mao adapted Marxism-Leninism to suit Chinese conditions but maintained the original theory's universal features.⁴⁵ But where this book builds on this precedent is in the application of this approach to global Maoism. It builds on scholarship by Fabio Lanza, among others, that highlights Maoism as a "political phenomenon that is valuable in itself."⁴⁶ Because Maoism was specifically situated yet contained global features, one ought to account for individual agency in reception, interpreta-

tion, and practice. This position is in line with PRC scholarship that seeks to challenge top-down analyses that have cast the CCP as a product of masterminds, its leaders as master manipulators, and Maoists as frenzied acolytes who could have subscribed to Maoist thought only because of exploitation. As in botany, a graft requires both the “insertion of a scion from a foreign plant into the stock of a native plant” and the rejection or acceptance of that graft.⁴⁷ This dynamism is at the core of Maoism, which was not a rigid, monolithic scion that China sought to “graft” forcefully onto host bodies, but a malleable scion that was, as it remains, resilient, adaptable, and an alternative to those predominant scions that demand parasitism rather than symbiosis.⁴⁸

The themes and debates on which Cambodia scholars have focused are largely different from those under the microscope of PRC historians. Although there are many books on Pol Pot and the CPK, the story of Cambodian Maoism and its transformation under the Pol Pot regime into a “Kampucheanized” Maoism has yet to receive due attention. The prevailing scholarship has varied in its assessment of the CPK’s orientation. Scholars have characterized the CPK either as “the most thoroughgoing Marxist-Leninist movement in an era of revolutions,” one that contained a “Cultural Revolution faction,” or as subscribing to “hyper-Maoism,” often drawing facile links between China and Democratic Kampuchea.⁴⁹ French scholarship has traced preliminary parallel threads between the early Paris-educated CPK ministers’ writings and Mao’s works. But these studies do not provide a detailed analysis and textual exegesis that highlights Cambodian radical intellectuals’ engagement with Maoism or how initial engagements translated into concrete practice and, ultimately, into intraparty discord over implementation.⁵⁰

In dialogue with English and French scholarship on the CPK, this book demonstrates that the Cambodian intellectuals’ engagement with Maoism was serious and had a long-lasting imprint on their political lives and practices. Unlike previous efforts, this book places their social experiences, networks, and dialectical engagement with Maoist works at the forefront and considers these factors on their own terms. It then seeks to answer two ever-elusive questions on the CPK in power. First, how was Maoism Kampucheanized? Second, why did the collective leadership of onetime close comrades disintegrate, with only those loyal to Pol Pot left standing? Extant scholarship has yet to answer these questions.

By drawing on vital work in PRC and Cambodian histories, I demonstrate that although Mao and the CCP provided the ideological inspiration for the CPK, the Paris Group intellectuals wrestled with Maoism as their own interpretations, ambitions, and objectives guided their reception and practice. Even within these engagements, different Maos and Maoisms rose to the forefront

among the future CPK ministers. Hou Yuon and Hu Nim wrestled with Mao's revolutionary canon from before his ascendancy to undisputed party leadership (1927–1940), whereas Pol Pot revisited Maoism only as a guidepost for the Cambodian movement upon his visit to Beijing in 1965–1966, when Maoism was that of the Cultural Revolution. In dialogue with scholarship on global Maoism, this book challenges extant understandings of Maoism outside China by highlighting the individual interpretive agency of Maoists globally, with oft-overlooked Cambodia as the centerpiece of analysis.

Telling the Story: The Challenges of Dealing with Mao and Pol Pot

In any study of extraordinary historical personages who oversaw or inspired extraordinary brutality, it is important to state outright that the author does not endorse the ideas of the Communists under analysis. This book's aim is not to produce a hagiographic account of Mao, replete with unremitting praise, or an apology for his errors.⁵¹ To focus exclusively on the failures of Mao or the Chinese revolution—for instance, the horrible outcomes of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution—does not allow us to evaluate more fairly Mao's contributions to China and the world.⁵² Neither does portraying Mao as “not a true Marxist-Leninist . . . the biggest feudal despot in the history of China.”⁵³ Rather infamously, some writers cast him as a “liar, ignoramus, fool, philistine, vandal, lecher, glutton, hedonist, drug-peddler, ghoul, bully, thug, coward, posturer, manipulator, psychopath, sadist, torturer, despot, megalomaniac, and the greatest mass murderer in the twentieth century.”⁵⁴

Another matter concerns scholars who wish to view Maoism's and China's relations with the Global South through a cold warrior lens to posit China as a phantasmic, omnipresent monolith. In so doing, they sidestep decades of PRC scholars' efforts to move away from a Mao-centric perspective of the Cold War. Those who describe Maoism as “like a dormant virus,” wittingly or unwittingly, resuscitate a Sinocentric view of China as manipulating Third World actors into doing Beijing's Cold War bidding.⁵⁵ Instead, Maoism was, and remains, a global ideological system that appealed to like-minded Communists across the world in times of desperation and against severe repression. Maoism has value as a lens through which one can examine varied responses to modernization and globalization. Despite bearing Mao's name, Maoism was not the product solely of his own work and invention. PRC historians have labored for decades to correct the record in this regard. Even if what Mao and

his contemporaries produced and exported was “Maoism,” Mao was not its solitary originator. Rather, the Maoism that came out of China was state sanctioned, and other people embraced it as such. This book also avoids using Mao and Maoism as monoliths, or stand-ins, for the CCP and for the factions and groups within its Party Center.

The book’s focus on the Paris-educated CPK figures Hou Yuon, Hu Nim, and Pol Pot and its attempt to recenter them as instrumental in framing Democratic Kampuchea are at odds with some views.⁵⁶ My selection of these figures is motivated primarily by dint of their roles as authors of Democratic Kampuchea’s foundational national texts. All three wrestled with Maoism in serious ways, and it was their Paris connection, their political and revolutionary posts in the 1950s and 1960s, and their break from each other after 1975 that underpinned their selection for analysis. I do not write extensively about Ieng Sary, Nuon Chea, Son Sen, Vorn Vet, and other major CPK figures, although they left their imprint on the intellectuals under analysis.⁵⁷ Accounts of these men and their individual passages through different thought spaces and social encounters are undeniably important, but they fall outside the book’s purview. Democratic Kampuchea’s prime minister, Khieu Samphan, fits a description similar to Yuon and Nim, and he was part of the same circles. But by 1975 he had sided with Pol Pot against his Paris Group comrades, and the scholarly assessment of his role has been that he was a talented secretary and water carrier but not much else. Although Samphan and Sary were also Paris-educated sojourning intellectuals and important figures within the CPK Central Committee, one does not find the same degree of ideological planning for Cambodia, if any by Sary, in their writings. Their contributions ultimately fall under the organizational rather than the ideological category.

I recognize that many Cambodia scholars disagree with the lasting influence of Maoism on the CPK. My motivation for looking at such influence is to set up new discussions of China’s role in framing CPK ideology, even if most pro-China Cambodian intellectuals had been purged by 1977. I also do not intend to take agency away from Cambodian intellectuals by emphasizing China or Maoism as a driving agent. Recent publications on China-Cambodia relations cover diplomatic relations admirably, so I discuss such relations only in a contextual sense and avoid placing blame on Beijing for the CPK’s crimes. Chinese advisers had active roles before the CPK takeover, but despite China’s direct involvement in every stage of the CPK’s rise to power, the CCP actually became the subordinate party.⁵⁸ Beijing granted the CPK technical assistance, material aid, and rhetorical support for its struggle, but Beijing did not exercise a significant level of influence over CPK policies, even if the CCP provided the ideological inspiration for many of them. My aim in the pages

that follow is to connect the Cambodian radicals who became CPK ministers to the global history of ideas—a history in which these men, however controversial, do indeed belong.

Sources and Their Limitations

Important files on Southeast Asia at the International Liaison Department of the Central Committee of the CCP in Beijing, the party's main agency in directing foreign relations, and at the Foreign Ministry Archives of the PRC are "classified in perpetuity" (*yongjiu baomi*). Any detailed account of China's relationship with the CPK is particularly difficult because all information about CCP-CPK relations between 1960 and 1990 is completely off-limits. There were undeniably many Chinese advisers on the ground in Democratic Kampuchea, and they were certainly important in developing infrastructure there. The degree to which they actually influenced CPK policy, however, remains a mystery.⁵⁹

As with any study of the CCP's relations with controversial regimes, a researcher must work with what is available and connect the dots by using those limited primary sources that the Chinese state does not deem sensitive. Primary sources published by the Foreign Languages Press and distributed by the International Bookstore were especially useful. Mao's Cultural Revolution-era speeches on the global relevance of China's revolutionary experience aided significantly in constructing the book's second chapter.⁶⁰ Additional primary sources for chapters 1 and 2 were available at the Shanghai Library and the Shanghai Municipal Archives. I obtained period journals such as *Southeast Asia Research* (*Dongnanya yanjiu*), *Southeast Asia Studies* (*Dongnanya yanjiu ziliao*), and *Southeast Asian Affairs* (*Dongnanya wenti ziliao*), which yielded useful insight into Mao-era Chinese scholars' interest in the region. Newspaper articles in *People's Daily* (*Renmin ribao*) provided information on state visits, party proceedings, and China-Cambodia exchanges. Together, these primary sources allowed me to gauge, to some degree, Chinese interest in exporting its revolution to Cambodia.

Newsprint holdings at Xiamen University's Center for Southeast Asian Studies, which have not received prior attention, and others that I acquired independently were instrumental in capturing China-Cambodia exchanges. Most overlooked in the extant literature is the Chinese-language newspaper *Sino-Khmer Daily* (*Mianhua ribao*), operated by the Battambang Overseas Chinese Party Organization (BOCPO). Founded in Battambang in 1956, *Sino-Khmer Daily* "had a strong voice and great impact on the overseas Chinese community."⁶¹ A related source, a memoir by CCP intelligence officer and *Sino-Khmer*

Daily interpreter, journalist, and acting president Vita Chieu (a.k.a. Zhou Degao, 1932–2020), provided an invaluable record of CCP aims to spur Cultural Revolution enthusiasm in Cambodia. His memoir and issues of *Sino-Khmer Daily* also document China-Cambodia exchanges in Chinese for *Sino-Khmer* readers. The absence of *Sino-Khmer Daily*, in particular, from scholarship on CPK-CCP connections is odd since, by the time of the formalization of China-Cambodia diplomatic relations in 1958, it was the official propaganda outlet of the PRC's embassy in Phnom Penh (*shishi tingming yu Zhongguo dashiguande xuanchuan meiti*). This newspaper also provided indispensable information on China's strong support for Cambodia and on its genuine fraternal relations with the small, nonaligned nation.⁶²

In Cambodian and French archives I sought sources on the origins of Maoism in Cambodian intellectual dialogues and on the nature of Maoist theory and practice in Cambodia. As this book is about ideological transmutation, it evaluates a historical and political experience and what it meant for the people who lived it. The National Archives of Cambodia and the Documentation Center of Cambodia, both in Phnom Penh, yielded issues of the newspaper *Revolutionary Flag* (*Dan' Pativatt*), official speeches, interviews, broadcasts by Radio Phnom Penh, and essays by CPK leaders Pol Pot, Hou Yuon, and Hu Nim. I also draw warily and with scrutiny from hundreds of pages of CPK forced "confessions" that were extracted under torture and "reflect the boastful, evasive, or exculpatory views of the torturers themselves."⁶³ In between false admissions of treason and conspiracy, though, these sources contain useful information about major CPK figures' lives before they joined the CPK. I corroborate such information with other documents and use them not as sources to track such figures' falls from grace within the party, but to capture their emergence in the CPK's orbit.

Among the great finds at the National Archives of Cambodia was Nim's 1965 doctoral dissertation, "The Economic Public Services of Cambodia."⁶⁴ Nim, the former vice president of the Khmer-Chinese Friendship Association, referenced Maoist China and Maoist materials unequivocally in his dissertation. Resources from the largest law library in Europe, the Cujas Library of Pantheon-Sorbonne University, included original copies of Paris-trained Cambodian intellectuals' doctoral dissertations. The most important of these texts were Yuon's "The Cambodian Peasants and Their Prospects for Modernization" (1955) and his mentee Khieu Samphan's "Cambodia's Economy and Its Problems with Industrialization" (1959).⁶⁵

The Emergence of Global Maoism

This book looks at the story of the emergence of global Maoism through the perspective of the longer-term traveling theory that brought Marxism-Leninism to Mao's attention, Mao to the CCP leadership, and Maoism to the radicals who became ministers of the CPK. We will see the theory traveling—indeed, bounding—across Eurasia as Marxism-Leninism takes root in China in Mao Zedong Thought and then captures the interest of radical Cambodian intellectuals first in Paris and later in Beijing. We will see the phases of the adaptation of this traveling theory and how it was changed first by Mao's own experiences in China and then by Pol Pot's and his colleagues' radicalization, revolutionary activities, and rule over revolutionary Democratic Kampuchea.

The book begins by giving a picture of how Mao Zedong Thought became Maoism and what it looked like when Pol Pot visited Beijing in 1965–1966 as a delegation leader of the CPK's predecessor organization, the Worker's Party of Kampuchea. The first part of the book discusses Maoism as framed in Mao's writings and pronouncements to outline how Mao Zedong Thought became an ideological system and how it transformed when it made the transition from thought to policies in the PRC. Next, we turn to the CCP's effort to “export the Chinese revolution to the world” (*xiang shijie shuchu geming*).⁶⁶ A close reading of Chinese-language sources illuminates the shift of Chinese socialism from an emphasis on class revolution to a larger anticolonial project between 1949 and 1965.⁶⁷ This episode also shines a light on Pol Pot, who benefited from the CCP's shift in foreign policy. His disillusionment with his Vietnamese mentors, whose imprint was on CPK organizational and tactical approaches, provided the final push toward Maoism.⁶⁸

By examining how Pol Pot, Yuon, and Nim adapted Maoism in the foundational national texts of Democratic Kampuchea, the next part of the book seeks to determine the crux of what they were saying and the role of Marxism, and then Maoism, in constructing their viewpoints. To connect the Maoism that made sense to the Paris Group with the Maoism that Pol Pot brought back from Beijing in 1966, this episode highlights Paris and its role in the ideological formation of the CPK's intellectual thrust. Important here is an understanding of Parisian intellectual life in the 1950s, including how intellectuals popularized Communism as practiced by Stalin, critiques of American imperialism, and the rise of Third World liberation movements as important phenomena.⁶⁹ The overtly Stalinist French Communist Party, which emphasized the personal charisma of its leader, Maurice Thorez, and struck a sympathetic chord with Pol Pot, was the Paris Group's first exposure to a hard-line Com-

munist party organization.⁷⁰ As Soviet policy came under scrutiny, the Paris Group became Maoists, as recalled by Pol Pot's onetime mentor Keng Vannsak in a 1982 interview.⁷¹

Next, the book shifts to uncovering how the Maoist-influenced ideas in the writings of the Paris Group provided the theoretical grounds for its members' approaches to policy implementation when working in their homeland. It focuses on Yuon and Nim, both of whom wrote economics dissertations and occupied political posts from which to apply their Maoist ideas.⁷² By contrast, Pol Pot worked for years as a Communist under Hanoi's direction after returning home without a degree in 1953. This episode thus outlines how these charismatic political figures penetrated peasant society and mobilized the largely impoverished masses with their ideas. It traces threads between the foundational writings and those revolutionary newspapers, official speeches and essays, and government documents that discuss policy on the ground.

The final part of the book draws from confidential CPK leadership documents, party magazines, and official leadership speeches to highlight the political processes of consolidation, economic reconfiguration, and social transformation (or revolutionary perpetuation) in Democratic Kampuchea. As proposals by Yuon and Nim made the transition from page to paddy, their ideas underpinned, in extreme form, the policies of the Pol Pot regime. Democratic Kampuchea's policies of isolationism, the evacuation of Cambodia's cities, the abolition of currency, the deference to agricultural production, and the expulsion of foreigners all originated in the foundational national texts at the crux of this analysis. Rather than seeking to surpass Vietnam as superior Communists or the Chinese in socialist edification, the Pol Pot regime aimed to outdo *any* previous Communist state. Pol Pot's rejection of Maoism in favor of a "Kampuchean" path to socialism was in fact quintessentially Maoist. Mao himself, after all, had committed China to pursuance of a Chinese road to socialism after breaking from the Soviet path that had dictated many of his earlier policies. By way of epilogue, the concluding chapter summarizes the book's findings and their implications for scholarship on Maoism and the CPK while opening the door for the application of the book's model to other transnational thought streams.

CHAPTER 1

Discovering Truth through Practice

Mao Zedong Thought Conceived and Implemented, 1927–1965

The Hunanese often say, “Straw sandals have no pattern—they shape themselves in the making.”

—Mao Zedong, 1958

Dismiss the hundred schools, revere only the
Confucian (Bachu baijia, duzun Rushu)

—slogan of the former Han dynasty

This chapter applies the expanded theoretical framework to track the evolution of Mao Zedong Thought in China with a view toward explaining how it came to be and, then, why Cambodian Maoism ought to receive recognition as Maoism. The history of Mao Zedong Thought demonstrates how Marxism traveled, and its indigenization into Maoism displays the validity of the expanded model of traveling theory vis-à-vis its globalization. Mao’s reception of Soviet and European Marxism-Leninism was transformed in its production of Mao Zedong Thought as an ideological system; his social experiences as a networked intellectual whose thinking was situated in China’s sociopolitical problems explain how he shaped and adapted it. Mao’s passages through intellectual spaces are reminiscent of similar patterns among Cambodian intellectuals who, like him, reacted to life-altering changes in governance by taking a radical turn. Mao’s most influential writings and speeches represent foundational components and reflect the maturation of his views on Marxism, China’s revolution, and both in light of the CCP’s struggle. Their utility lies in providing a foundational textual road map to Mao’s Chinese model of revolution, which pairs neatly with those of Cambodian Maoists turned political leaders who crafted their own model in 1950s Paris. Radical social change combined with sojourns through ideological and physical spaces to lead them to recognize Maoism as a fit for the Cambodian historical situation.

Conditions of reception, adaptation, and implementation show how Mao Zedong Thought as practiced in the 1960s was different from Mao Zedong Thought as Mao wrote, theorized about, and adapted during the Second Sino-Japanese War and as canonized at the Seventh Congress of the CCP in 1945. I explore how Mao, a charismatic revolutionary, synthesized national distinctiveness with a particular mode of class struggle that was rooted in China's historical experience. His personal charisma aided in forging a place for his thought within a competitive CCP. Conditions of production and reception guide us through the chapter's first part: Mao's engagement with Marxism and his career as a pragmatic revolutionary in the 1930s–1940s. Three key variables in the expanded theoretical model are noteworthy: (1) the relation of the language of Marxism to China's cultural setting at the time (impact/relational), (2) the structure of the historical circumstances in China (condition of reception), and (3) the process whereby it became important to Mao and his fellow Communists (practical/normative).

These variables take us to the social and political problems that the actors in question did not handle successfully and for whom the exogenous theory seemed to offer novel solutions. Through trial and error, these actors adapted it to address such problems practically to create an a posteriori knowledge-informed new theory. Then, they adapted it normatively to render the theory congruent with particular norms to establish a workable, exportable ideological system. Mao held that thought is transformed in a process of dialectical interaction among theory, practice, and theory again. In so doing, he joined Marxism-Leninism's universal principles with the concrete practice of the Chinese revolution (Sinification) to position it to resonate as a political viewpoint by the 1934–1935 Long March and later during the 1941–1944 Yan'an Rectification campaigns (*Yan'an zhengfeng yundong*).

The second part turns to the three phases of implementation that elucidate it as a response to modernization: (1) consolidation: embodied first in the 1941–1944 Yan'an Rectification campaigns, then in the three phases of the 1947–1950 Land Reform (*Tugai*) movement, the 1950–1952 Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries (*Zhenya fangeming*), and the 1956 Hundred Flowers (*Baihua qifang*) and 1957–1959 Anti-Rightist (*Fanyou yundong*) campaigns; (2) economic reconfiguration: the CCP's 1958–1961 Great Leap Forward (*Dayuejin*) program for rapid economic and industrial development; and (3) social transformation (revolutionary perpetuation): the primary objective of the 1962–1965 Socialist Education Movement (SEM) and the task of prolonging the revolution by cleansing the party bureaucracy ("Four Cleanups" [*Siqing yundong*]; politics, economy, organization, ideology). As the section shows, the post-Leap retrenchment culminated with an ideological revival that served as a prelude to the Cultural Revolution and the formation of the faith Maoism

that the CCP exported globally and that Pol Pot encountered in Beijing. The expanded framework's application therefore explores, at once, the creation of what the CPK leadership borrowed from the CCP and the process that repeated in Democratic Kampuchea (DK).

Mao's Reception of Marxism and Becoming a Communist, 1910–1927

Reception takes center stage as this section explores the intellectual journey that Mao undertook toward espousing Marxism. Mao's earlier experiences and social milieu serve as points of departure for uncovering how he combined Marxist/universal with Chinese/particular. Such experiences were shaped by upheavals that characterized his formative years, and by a sense of mission and freedom that drove many people of ideas to look outside China for inspiration. During this tumultuous period of the late Qing and early Republican China, Chinese intellectuals developed a sense of iconoclasm toward Chinese culture and traditions alongside strong nationalist sentiments.¹ This section explores social dynamics and spaces in which Mao found himself situated that played an equally crucial part in this transformation. That Marxism "spoke" to Mao and other Chinese progressives reveals a major theme: seeing Mao Zedong Thought and Maoism not only as located at the nexus of "two histories" (one global and one Chinese)² but also as a product of the same processes of cross-cultural borrowing and fit that Cambodian Communists encountered years later.

Mao was born in 1893 in Shaoshan village in the eastern part of Hunan to a family of wealthy peasants (*funong*). Though not born into the intellectual elite, he became a "petit intellectual" by receiving a classical education and took an interest in Chinese philosophy, literature, history, and poetry. He moved to Changsha at seventeen, where his limited, albeit important, contact with the outside world led him to discover China's global positionality. He established the New People's Study Society (NPSS), which had members in France on a labor-study program, encouraged active and collective living, and blended Chinese organizations and values with outside ideas that became superlative forces for drastic upheaval. Before Mao became a Marxist, he passed through a "practical-political" phase in which he was exposed to and sought to apply numerous other political thoughts to China's political situation. This reveals the nature of the changing space in which Mao found himself and his ever-changing ideological pastiche of endogenous and foreign materials for service to China.³

Mao soon gravitated toward more practice-oriented approaches. In particular, he admired Chen Duxiu's active, practical engagement with problems in China and Pyotr Kropotkin's conception of nonviolent anti-annihilationist anarchism. After visiting Shanghai and Beijing in 1918, and years of engaging with philosophies of liberation, revolution, and popular power—all of which he found in Enlightenment discourse—he shifted to popular power.⁴ His “present view of absolute liberalism, anarchism, and even democracy” was that these sounded “very good in theory, but [were] not feasible in reality.”⁵ He wrote “The Great Union of the Popular Masses” (1919), wherein he framed the success of the French, Bolshevik, and eastern European revolutions as contingent on the “terribly effective” popular masses, which greatly outnumbered the wealthier, oppressor classes worldwide.⁶ Mao also alluded to issues that he confronted head-on in Hunan in 1927: that the union of many groups into one, numerically superior force could initiate great reform of Chinese society.

Two events pushed Mao toward Marxism. First, Mao and many Chinese intellectuals viewed the 1919 Treaty of Versailles as a Euro-American capitulation of moral preeminence, as its provision transferred former German holdings on Chinese soil, including Shandong, to Japan. Intellectual currents from the anti-imperialist May Fourth Movement had entrenched in Mao the primacy that he placed on organizing the masses of people and spurred him to criticize what he viewed as a backward centralized state.⁷ Second, Mao's 1920 correspondence with Paris-based Cai Hesen (1895–1931), a fellow founder of the NPSS, shone new light on the merit of violent revolution in China. Mao and Cai had spent time meeting with like-minded peers and discussing radical trends as presented by Chen Duxiu and Li Dazhao—the latter of whom established the Society for the Study of Marxist Theory at Peking University, and later in Shanghai established a Communist cell. Mao was initially apprehensive, but Cai's letters on Bolshevism updated Mao on events in Moscow and insisted that only a violent revolution could reverse China's negative social and political trends.⁸ Whether it was Cai's connection of China to a worldwide Bolshevik movement or his emphasis on organized activism, his guidance presented Mao with a lens through which to interpret pervasive social problems in China in terms of “class” and “class conflict.”⁹ Mao was convinced, once stating, “There is not one word with which I do not agree.”¹⁰

By 1920, Mao was on the cusp of making the jump to labor organizer and Communist. Although many of his writings through 1921 were neither theoretically clear nor politically univocal, he took a radical (yet not necessarily Marxist) stance in the NPSS's last meeting that reflected the pervading May Fourth enthusiasm of the time. Indeed, at this stage, Chinese intellectuals'

broader reception and acceptance of Marxism—and enough of them to found a party—was far from reality. Much of Marxism was open to interpretation in a non-European setting, and although it identified a problem in Chinese society, it gave no indication on how to solve it.¹¹ An appreciation of linking theory and practice thus characterized early Chinese intellectual engagement with Marxism.

Marxism's popularization grew exponentially, however, with the April 1920 arrival of Comintern Far Eastern Bureau Chief Grigori Voitinsky in Beijing. Although not the sole activating agent, his visit spurred in students a new interest in Lenin's writings, which made the foreign theory of Marxism palatable because it grounded the success of the Bolshevik Revolution and anti-imperial struggle in concrete practice rather than abstract theory.¹² Voitinsky's visit led the messianic message and melodrama of the Leninist world image of Marxism to rise to the forefront in radical thought circles in contrast to the gradualism of John Dewey's approach and a growing impatience with democracy and science.

Mao's role within the NPSS evolved from organizing night classes for workers to rallying Hunan labor unions to planning work stoppages, all of which increased labor organizing exponentially and earned him a foundational role in the CCP's first congress. Although he remained very much May Fourth in style in the early 1920s—as he would not have a “serious familiarity” with Marxist works until the 1930s, when Chinese translations were more widely available—he gravitated toward Bolshevism.¹³ His appreciation of the Russian Revolution and disillusionment with alternatives deepened, and by the mid-1920s Mao “declared his support for the ‘total solution’ and common ideology embodied in Bolshevik Communism.”¹⁴

Mao's intellectual journey before and during May Fourth and the political battles that he later fought as a CCP member are part of the whole process of his reception and adaptation of outside political thought. The currents of thought that surrounded Mao and his experiences in epicenters of radical social change guided him toward radical critiques of China's and the world's status quo. He moved from a classical education to synthesizing foreign materials together to wed extant Chinese political thought with Euro-American philosophies in “a hybrid language of its own in modern China.”¹⁵ Mao shifted from his earlier “practical-political” approach to new ideas to a “theoretical-organizational” one in which Marxism's emphasis on revolutionary struggle supplanted his earlier affinity for populist universalism.¹⁶

Interest in Marxism soon led to recognition of Communism's practicability, and a commitment to organizationally defined Marxism emerged thereafter. Chinese progressives leaped to practice before grasping theory fully, in

effect becoming “Communists before they were ever Marxists.”¹⁷ The careful understanding of a theory often takes a back seat to practical application, as is true in some aspects of the Cambodian case.¹⁸ Thus how to make the foreign familiar—and more than abstraction or dogma—was for Mao and the CPK leaders the first step in adapting thought into a practical system.

Mao’s Adaptation of Thought into a System, 1927–1940

The adaptation stage of the expanded model comprises two strands. The first is practical adaptation, the process whereby an idea becomes important to people other than the initial recipient(s). The second is normative adaptation, whereby the recipient or recipients take that which is gleaned from practice to revise the idea into an ideological system with contemporary relevance. Mao rose to prominence in the CCP in the 1920s because of his enthusiastic organizing in the peasant movement. His effort to ground Marxism in the Chinese experience through his early writings and Yan’an period essays as the CCP revolution continued into the 1930s led his thought to crystallize around Marxism, a foreign ideology, and Chinese rural society.¹⁹ Mao’s Sinification of Marxism, with which he read Marxism-Leninism as a universal critical interpretive paradigm into China’s historical experience, was one of several reasons for his rise to CCP leadership between 1935 and 1943.

Mao’s rise was not based solely on these ideas, and party headship was still beyond his grasp.²⁰ He secured Stalin’s reluctant endorsement in 1938, survived a military challenge by Zhang Guotao, and outmaneuvered his key party challenger, Wang Ming (Chen Shaoyu, 1904–1974), in 1939. The pressures of the anti-Japanese war slowed his next step, to inculcate the party leadership in his “correct thought,” but he mobilized a talented group of fellow CCP leaders, notably Liu Shaoqi (1898–1969), Peng Zhen (1902–1997), and Kang Sheng (1898–1975), to support his plan for cadre education and administrative reform—Yan’an Rectification. Ideology, military power, and bureaucratic politics were key variables. But so too were the successes of his administrative reforms to streamline the party to get cadres into the villages and to improve the army’s treatment of civilians.

Mao as a Pragmatic Communist, 1927–1935

Mao became a Marxist because he saw the relevance of Marxism to the Chinese context (1919–1927). Upon the CCP’s flight from the cities and insurgency

against the GMD, Mao adapted Marxism to fit it to Chinese conditions. This adaptation attracted the ire of Moscow-trained Chinese Communists (28 Bolsheviks), who made it their mission to apply their understanding of Soviet Communism to the Chinese countryside. The problems that accompanied the CCP's land policy were testament to this doctrinaire approach. Mao's opposition to the more extreme policies of the 28 Bolsheviks originated in his examining the local and objective reality of the Chinese countryside. He undertook a series of rural investigations to unearth on-the-ground conditions, which inspired his later axiom "Without investigation, there is no right to speak" (*meiyou diaocha, meiyou fayan quan*).²¹ In this period, Mao held that policies that worked were correct, and practice was the sole criterion of truth.

Mao's experiences working on the CCP's Central Committee in Shanghai in 1923 gave no indication that he was primed to become the party's supreme theorist, and developments in the world Communist movement indicated that the CCP was to follow rather than lead. Directives from Moscow for the CCP to collaborate with the GMD were anathema to renewed activism. The Bolsheviks' proclamation at the 1920 Third International (Comintern) that "Bolshevization" (bureaucratic centralism) was the strategic basis for defeating capitalism further complicated CCP designs to communize the GMD. Internal disagreements between Comintern officials Voitinsky and Mikhail Borodin over a CCP-GMD united front caused the Executive Committee of the Communist International to force the CCP leadership to pursue communization while reluctantly upholding the integrity of a united front.

Although they worked together, the GMD seized the opportunity during the Northern Expedition, in full swing by 1926, to eliminate influential leftists from inside the party (the 1927 "Shanghai Massacre"). GMD conservative factions violently purged Communists, undid CCP gains in the united front, and forced coalition members and rank and filers (fifteen thousand to twenty-five thousand members, close to 90 percent) into flight from the cities. Chiang Kai-shek dealt the Communists a deathblow, but the redeeming feature was that the CCP model of rural revolution came into existence through this struggle for survival. Amid flight, improvisation, adaptation, and rebirth (and a shift from Bolshevism to armed struggle), the CCP recalibrated its strategy around rural revolution.²² This revision had an effect on Mao, as his own appreciation of Marxism informed a shrewd appraisal of China's class situation and view of the revolution as part of a global struggle.

Two of Mao's earliest Marxist writings illuminate how he assessed the status of China's various classes and concluded that the proletariat and peasantry, if united, possessed the greatest revolutionary potential to reverse China's negative historical trends. In "Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society" (1926),

Mao confronted a largely agrarian Chinese society with only a marginal urban working class, whereas Marx had formulated his class analysis on industrialized Europe.²³ But Mao did not simply classify his compatriots into categorical groups shot through a Marxist lens; rather, he explained why “all previous revolutionary struggles in China achieved so little.” China’s proletariat, semiproletariat, petty bourgeoisie, and the lumpenproletariat had “failed to unite with real friends” and resist oppression by imperialists and the proprietor and comprador classes. Partly responsible for this failure was the proletariat’s backward status and unwariness toward the potentially damaging middle bourgeois class, which Mao regarded as containing anti-left factions that could sow discord among the ranks. The proletariat, he urged, had to harness the revolutionary potential of the predominantly peasant lumpenproletariat, a class of “brave,” albeit “apt to be destructive,” fighters who stood as “a revolutionary force if given proper guidance.”²⁴ The Chinese proletariat and its “friends” ultimately needed to band together to unshackle themselves from imperialist and landlord chains of oppression.

Mao expanded on the role of the peasantry in “Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan” (1927), in which he argued that the peasantry’s revolutionary zeal, if harnessed by the proletariat, could form a truly national revolutionary base.²⁵ Two years before the CCP’s 1927 retreat, Mao had been involved in the joint CCP-GMD peasant movement led originally by peasants’ rights activist Peng Pai (1896–1929). Mao was the director of the sixth class of the Guangzhou Peasant Movement Training Institute (PMTI), the most important in the country, and earned a reputation as someone capable of nurturing activists to mobilize peasants. His important early work in 1925–1927 was instrumental to convincing him that peasant revolution was a viable way forward.

Mao was the ranking CCP-GMD chief expert on the Hunan peasants, and his eyewitness account of the conditions of five Hunan counties between 4 January and 5 February 1927 is indicative less of a manifesto per se and more of an appeal to the CCP rather than the broad masses.²⁶ He boldly predicted that soon “several hundred million peasants in China’s central, southern and northern provinces, will rise like a fierce wind or tempest, a force so swift and violent that . . . will, *in the end*, send all the imperialists, warlords, corrupt officials, local bullies, and bad gentry to their graves.” Mao insisted that a revolution “is not like inviting people to dinner, or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery. . . . [It] is an uprising, an act of violence” that must initiate a “brief reign of terror” across the countryside.²⁷

Because of this revolutionary approach, the Chinese peasantry had accomplished what Sun Yat-Sen had failed to do: destroy the feudal forces. Although

feudal classes abhorred the rise of strong, self-supporting peasant associations urged by Mao, the “clear-sighted” classes saw in the peasantry tremendous revolutionary potential. Though wealthy peasants, by his assessment, lacked revolutionary fervor and were inactive, and middle peasants were important allies but not leaders of the peasant associations, poor peasants were the most fitting to spearhead the rural movement. As the reeling CCP now lacked a strong proletarian constituency, Mao’s call for broad recruitment presented the party with a potentially revolutionary alternative base.²⁸

This alternative base became all the more crucial with the end of “legal Communism” by 1927 and the GMD’s October 1930 resolution to launch the first of five campaigns to wipe out the Communists. The moves forced the CCP to fall back to its Soviet strongholds, most notably the Jiangxi Central Soviet (Chinese Soviet Republic; *Zhonghua Suwei’ai gongheguo*). The Jiangxi Soviet period (1931–1934) brought an important challenge to light in Mao’s practical adaptation of Marxism: how to address contradictions between the Red Army and new local recruits. In its haste, the Party Center did not resolve those existing tensions that plagued the party after the post–Li Lisan (1899–1967) affair reorganization.²⁹

The Jiangxi Soviet period also brought to bear that the CCP had no practical program for its revolution despite breaking new ground with rural peoples and farmers.³⁰ The 1931 land reform forced the CCP to confront the suitability of applying Lenin’s 1905 Constitution, which he designed with an industrial working class in mind, to the rural Jiangxi Soviet. The CCP adopted it at the 7–20 November 1931 First All-China Congress. Its declaration that the Soviet was a “democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry” when it was a one-party dictatorship with a nonexistent industrial working class vanguard was specious. But the constitution initiated a provision that would seize lands from “feudal lords and landlords, militarists and village bosses, gentry, and other big private landowners.”³¹ The problem, however, was its softness toward middle peasants, whom the party forbade from profiting from property sales. The absence of any reference to nationalization and collectivization undermined it, and by 1933–1934 the CCP determined that middle peasant wealth accumulation had made them untrustworthy allies. The decision signaled the CCP shift toward “highly coercive” rule and sent Mao back to the drawing board.

The Jiangxi Soviet had endured four counterinsurgency campaigns and in 1933 experienced an unexpected height, but its nadir occurred in 1934 with the GMD quelling the Communist movement.³² The failure in Jiangxi was a revelation for Mao, who now realized that applying theory to concrete realities required practicing that theory and then using that experience to inform

a new theory. He focused on the political and military mistakes of the 28 Bolsheviks (a “spent” force by the late 1930s) to reclaim his command in the Red Army and party organization in Ruijin. He identified the various mistakes that he and other CCP leaders had made and learned from them. The Jiangxi Soviet period also highlighted the party’s lack of a practical program for its revolution. It had found a base, albeit largely a coterie of China’s rural peoples, and thus had broken new ground with farmers. All that remained was how to proceed.

The two years between Jiangxi and Shaanxi (the Long March) signaled Mao’s emergence as supreme military strategist and CCP head after bitter struggles with political rivals Zhang Guotao (1897–1979) and Wang Ming, the latter of whom led the Moscow-educated, Comintern-backed 28 Bolsheviks that “dominated” CCP policies from 1931 to 1934.³³ Mao’s theoretical works had earned him some respect among his peers, having laid much of the groundwork for his political thought by 1937. He had also established strong partnerships within the party to secure power relations through loyalty. But between 1932 and 1934, much of Mao’s power, especially over the army, had vanished.³⁴ In this atmosphere of changes and CCP factionalism, Mao moved to position himself as supreme theorist and *primus inter pares* in the face of fierce opposition.

Mao rose to CCP leadership because of a blend of fortuitous chance (poor leadership of the early Long March leaders, including Zhou Enlai) and natural skill (his success as a military strategist).³⁵ His predecessors Chen Duxiu, Qu Qiubai, Li Lisan, and Wang Ming were arguably messengers who knew how to explain Marxism-Leninism, and not organizers of the Chinese revolution.³⁶ More accurately, Mao was the first to prove himself in politics and military affairs. CCP heads until Mao had failed to assert themselves as either strong leaders or able military tacticians. Mao accomplished both with his keen sense of survival and reputation, which positioned him well to carve the party’s path going forward. His rise paved the way for his particular form of pragmatic revolutionary leadership to become the party standard. In 1935 Mao emerged as the most vocal and powerful proponent of an approach to revolution that was rooted firmly in concrete conditions rather than blind implementation of foreign experiences (or orders, in the case of the Comintern) in China.

Yan’an Epoch, 1935–1942

In late 1930s Yan’an, the capital of the CCP’s burgeoning Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia base area, Mao’s thought (subjective) shifted to a system of practical revolution (objective). The CCP’s near vanquishing instigated a desperate yet creative improvisation in his thinking. He now emphasized practical adaptation,

rural revolution, survival, a military strategy (people's war), and method by which to overcome imperialism (New Democracy) and abstract dogmatism in a "new paradigm of revolution."³⁷ In so doing, Mao not only read Marxism into the Chinese historical experience but also "read the Chinese historical experience into Marxism, in the process 'recreating' Marxism."³⁸

In Yan'an, Mao penned four important essays that mark the shift from writing ideological works to formulating a genuine system for revolution; these essays constitute the focus of this section. All four, taken together, reveal three key steps in the practical adaptation of Marxism in Mao's writings: (1) Mao drew on Ming dynasty neo-Confucian philosopher Wang Yangming's "unity of knowledge and practice" (*zhixing heyi*) to propose a model of theory-practice-theory, whereby Marxist-Leninist theory was applied to China's revolutionary practice and then that experience would inform an a posteriori ideological system ("On Practice"); (2) Mao developed a military strategy with which the CCP could crush its opponents ("On Contradiction" and "On Protracted War"); and (3) Mao devised a process of socialist transition and democratic centralism whereby Marxism-Leninism's universal laws were applied to China's concrete realities ("On New Democracy"). Each step formed the fundamental pillars of the Maoist ideological system and stressed the importance of practical adaptation—that is, to wed theory with practice and then use that knowledge gleaned from experience to theorize again.

First, Mao wrote "On Practice" (July 1937), the first foundational part of Mao Zedong Thought, as an articulation of a "Marxist theory of cognition." The essay emphasized the acquisition of knowledge as people applied particular concepts to understand their concrete realities, and then "formulated general principles to guide action."³⁹ Mao raises the old Chinese saying, "How can you catch tiger cubs without entering the tiger's lair?" (*buru huxue, yande huzi*) to emphasize the importance of practice and direct experience in a person's knowledge and perception of the objective external world. He then contends that a priori knowledge is pure dogmatism and a posteriori knowledge (gleaned from practice) is objective reality. The proletariat interprets capitalist society, or the Chinese people perceive imperialism, when they derive knowledge through practical application. Mao locates his answer to the question, "How does human knowledge arise from practice and in turn serve practice?" in his theory-practice-theory paradigm. In emphasizing the dialectical-materialist theory of knowledge, Mao unifies "knowing and doing" to establish a Chinese method of Communist philosophy.⁴⁰

Second, "On Contradiction" (August 1937) and "On Protracted War" (May 1938) articulate a locally relevant strategy for making revolution—one of the substages of practical adaptation. "On Contradiction" offers a novel

strategy on how to approach the contradiction of universal and particular, whereas “On Protracted War” concerns a military strategy to defeat larger enemies that is missing in Marxist theory.⁴¹ The former, alongside “On Practice,” epitomizes Mao’s systematic formulation of those “abstract principles underlying his revolutionary practice.”⁴² “On Contradiction” identifies five problems in what Lenin termed the “kernel of dialectics” and argues that the key was to identify that contradictions were present everywhere in society. In each contradiction, a “central contradiction” existed with universal and particular dimensions.⁴³ Marxism (Marxism-Leninism for Mao’s Yan’an canon) contains universal and particular features, because the application of this universal ideology occurred in a particular historical setting. Chinese revolutionaries, Mao urged, ought to find a practical approach that neither deviated from Marxism-Leninism’s universality nor abandoned China’s historical milieu.

The careful application of Marxism-Leninism to the Chinese revolution represented the solution to this contradiction rather than the contravention of Marxism-Leninism’s universal features. This guided Mao in formulating “people’s war,” as he termed it. People’s war consisted of three essential protracted stages of war of strategic defensive, stalemate, and offensive, whereby the Communists could draw enemy forces into the interior and guerrilla forces could bleed them dry through attrition. This strategy had reverberations within and outside China, as the Chinese revolutionaries mastered this technique to the chagrin of the invading Japanese and, in so doing, set an example that virtually any Communist movement could follow.⁴⁴ The example of practical adaptation of Marxism-Leninism to an Asian context, as it turned out, was a compelling example for the CPK leaders in their struggle for power decades later.

Third, and above earlier formulations, “On New Democracy” (January 1940) signaled the quantum leap from practical to normative adaptation. In applying Marxist-Leninist universals to China’s concrete realities, Mao introduced a third way for the Chinese revolution that was neither Soviet socialist nor Euro-American capitalist. Democracy, Mao urges, would occur in China under terms and conditions that were different from those in the “Two Worlds” of the United States / Europe and the Soviet Union in that the state and governmental structure would emerge under the stewardship of the joint dictatorship of anti-imperialist classes.⁴⁵

“On New Democracy” is noticeably nationalist and Marxist-Leninist. Mao’s main contention is that the Chinese revolution comprises a democratic and socialist revolution, with the former belonging to a new category rather than an old one. The essay contextualized China’s present environment as the continuum of century-long “colonial,” “semi-colonial,” and “semi-feudal” vestiges that dated back to the Opium War within the scope of a worldwide

movement against imperialism that later characterized revolutions like the one in Cambodia. A revolution that breaks from the “old bourgeois” capitalist world revolution is part of a “new proletarian-socialist world revolution” in which all colonies and semicolonies are “allies of the revolutionary front of world socialism.” Concepts of “new nation” and “new culture” were necessary means to achieve this end. The solution was to embrace democratic centralism and inclusionary participation and to develop China’s economy “along the path of the ‘regulation of capital’ and the ‘equalization of landownership.’”⁴⁶ Only upon defeating Japanese imperialist aggression and transforming the old and feudal “culture” into something at once “new” and “democratic” could China reverse these negative forces.

Although “On New Democracy” did not receive widespread acceptance at first, it represents the “classic formulation of the premises of Chinese Marxism.”⁴⁷ Moreover, it arguably represents the culmination of Mao’s practical application of Marxism-Leninism to China into a coherent ideological system with global applicability (Maoism). How this work carved such a legacy was that it “made sense of China’s history and, more important, gave Chinese readers a sense of purpose, hope, and meaning,” all of which emerged during the intense study of Mao’s texts during Rectification.⁴⁸ Some essential components of New Democracy that inspired feelings of renewed optimism included a belief that all classes must play a role (inclusionary vs. exclusionary politics) in China’s future, the promotion of democratic centralism irrespective of sex, creed, property, or education, and a hard stance against “single step socialism.” Such inclusionary impulses and the stress on multistep socialism underpinned Mao’s Sinification, a “vernacular” variation of universal Marxism-Leninism and hallmark of its globalization as ideological discourse and interpretive paradigm in predominantly agricultural societies.⁴⁹

Normative Adaptation: The Sinification of Marxism and Rise of Mao Zedong Thought, 1940–1949

The second strand of adaptation consists of making a foreign idea congruent with contemporary norms of a particular society through the addition of a charismatic element. Two salient examples of this normative adaptation that elucidate that some features of the Leninist Party do not always transcend the leader are (1) Mao’s Sinification of Marxism-Leninism, introduced in “On the New Stage” (*Lun xinjieduan*, 1938) and developed in “On New Democracy,” and (2) the process whereby Mao’s adaptation became important to others during Yan’an Rectification.

The first, Sinification, stands as a type of modification that *leads back* to the leader (Mao). Aside from discussing a new stage of CCP-GMD cooperation in the war against Japan, Mao's long report to the CCP Central Committee's Sixth Enlarged Plenum ("On the New Stage," 1938) aimed to increase morale and assert his preeminence within and outside the CCP. He proposed the Sinification of Marxism: to adapt Marxist-Leninist concepts to fit China's historical situation. Sinification, importantly, initiated his thought's evolution into an ideological system.⁵⁰

Mao did not accomplish this alone. He surrounded himself with a brain trust of CCP theoreticians who were sympathetic to his cause, most notably Ai Siqu (1910–1966), Zhou Yang (1908–1989), and Mao's political secretary Chen Boda (1904–1989). Among others, these men aided Mao in formulating Sinified Marxism-Leninism and "worked assiduously to win [its] widespread acceptance throughout the party." Chen in particular held a solid, "culturally rooted understanding of Marx" that positioned him well to render Mao's Marxism into a "persuasive Chinese ideology."⁵¹ Marxism's inherent teleology of capitalist modernity and Eurocentrism posed major obstacles to its application in China.⁵² To appeal to laypersons, Marxism needed to speak in a "national voice" lest its ignorance of national experience render nugatory its inherent universality.⁵³

Initially ridiculed by Hu Feng (1902–1985) and Feng Xuefeng (1903–1976), Sinified Marxism became a major focus of Mao and his brain trust. A major obstacle in Yan'an was that it housed a "complex" and "much more polarized" mix of rich and poor than the CCP had encountered previously, as the influx of urbanite leftist writers, some of whom were critical of Mao, to Yan'an "contributed to a more radical and extreme application of CCP social policies."⁵⁴

Mao relied on "a great many people" in communicating his ideas and "what needed to be done from above," among them Ai Siqu, Chen Boda, Zhang Wentian, and Kang Sheng.⁵⁵ Ai and Chen, for our purposes, are the most important. In the early 1930s, Ai authored comprehensive philosophical pieces on Marxist concepts of universal laws and dialectical materialism. He cautioned against purely copying New Philosophy (*xin zhexue*), which only resulted in "basic theory." To "apply it concretely to the practical problems of China" and "concretely develop it in various ways," Ai persuaded Chinese intellectuals to consider New Philosophy, and many later became supporters of the CCP movement.⁵⁶ Likewise, Chen Boda communicated to cadres that they ought to embrace a concrete, normative Marxism that was "relevant to China as a nation with a problematic identity in a new historical situation."⁵⁷ He proposed a New Enlightenment Movement (*xin qimeng yundong*) to spur national forms in four ways: in literature and culture; a "systematic critique" of traditional

philosophy; the “‘enrichment’ of dialectical materialism by ‘concretizing’ it in Chinese problems”; and the synthesis of Chinese nationalism with proletarian internationalism. The last of these constituted an imprecise precursor to Sinification. Chen’s calls for a concretized dialectical materialism led him to coin the term “Sinification of Marxism” in May 1938, just before Mao deployed it in the Sixth Plenum.⁵⁸ Mao then defined Sinification as the synthesis of Marxian universal “laws” (which alone did not constitute Marxism as an ideological system) with the specific “laws” of the Chinese revolution’s “concrete historical practice.”⁵⁹

Mao’s adaptation of Marxism-Leninism to suit the country’s national characteristics—with Ai and Chen helping to pave the way for its reception—was essential to rendering this foreign ideological discourse into something concrete and beyond abstract dogma. In uniting universal and particular laws, Mao realized concrete Marxism in China’s historical setting and rephrased it in a “voice” that spoke to the specific struggle of the Chinese people in waging revolution. As he argued (and Xi Jinping invoked in a 2013 speech), “The relation between Marxism-Leninism and the Chinese Revolution is the same as between the arrow and target. . . . The arrow of Marxism-Leninism must be used to hit the target of the Chinese Revolution. . . . If it was otherwise, would we want to study Marxism-Leninism?”⁶⁰ Chen and Ai had succeeded in communicating Mao’s pragmatic Marxism to a larger audience and setting the foundation for Mao’s 1938 formulation. Both ultimately ensured Mao’s triumph over his rivals as the CCP’s supreme ideologue. But although Mao’s Sinification of Marxism-Leninism was innovative, he required a legion of believers to get behind it.

The second dimension of Mao’s normative adaptation of Marxism-Leninism, Yan’an Rectification, consolidated him at the center of the CCP, rephrased party history around his contributions, and invested his personal charisma into Marxism-Leninism. The CCP initiated the 1941–1944 Yan’an Rectification campaigns to reeducate its “storm membership drive” recruits through the rigorous study of the Maoist canon.⁶¹ Mao held Stalin’s *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* “as a model” and lauded it as “the highest synthesis of the world communist movement in the last 100 years, a model for the union of theory and practice.”⁶² This model, he proclaimed, was an essential guide to defeating Wang Ming and his comrades, who at the time held the Comintern’s favor. Not unlike Stalin before him, Mao proceeded to place himself as revolutionary hero, genius, and exemplar and Mao Zedong Thought (Yan’an Maoism) as ideological orthodoxy.

Mao and his loyalists began by organizing a study program to bestow on upper-level cadres his “correct” interpretation of CCP history. He personally

edited two volumes of *Secret Party Documents* from the Sixth Congress: *Since the Sixth Party Congress* (*Lida yilai*) of December 1941 and *Before the Sixth Party Congress* (*Liuda yiqian*).⁶³ In these edits, Mao held the correct, positive line, whereas other contributors to the revolutionary movement played secondary roles. He characterized opposition threats to his supremacy—Wang Ming, Bo Gu, and Zhang Wentian most notably—as obstructionist “rightists” and, ultimately, without positive contributions.⁶⁴ The CCP’s purge of Mao critics further solidified him at the center of party history and entrenched his interpretation of its past, present, and future line as correct.⁶⁵

Rectification also converted Mao into a symbol that Yan’anites, invigorated with a sense of revolutionary purpose, elevated alongside his written word as “core symbols of the CCP.” This symbolic capital accrued via a phenomenon of “exegetical bonding”:

While it is an engagement with words and ideas in a context of immediate social learning, [exegetical bonding] results in an emotional and symbolic intensity that includes the consciousness of self in terms of others. The result of exegetical bonding then is prescriptive illumination. Its higher purpose is enlightenment by the transcendence of ordinary understanding. The act of realizing transcendental understanding results in a kind of bonding. Through a personal *Aufhebung*, one reaches a new plane of interaction intertwined with discourse itself. Selected works serve to recode the self in terms of shared signifiers that are highly charged, and that becomes the unique property of the membership as a whole. By this means too, every ordinary aspect of life is imbued with intersubjective consciousness.

Over time, “an elan, an *esprit de corps*, a sense of heroic mission” was nurtured within those who engaged with Mao’s works experientially and exegetically.⁶⁶ Yan’an housed a “discourse community” that was “revolutionary in object and inversionary in goal [and which] embodied a radical, disjunctive, and transformational nationalism.” Yan’an’s “redemptive” and “transformational character” transformed Mao, already a respected theorist and military leader, into a “cosmocratic figure who, although secular, might easily have been theocratic.”⁶⁷ Mao’s charismatic leadership influenced action because of his personal authority, as he infused his charisma and idiosyncrasies into Mao Zedong Thought. This necessary charismatic authority could then justify CCP policies when they ran antithetical to his desires.

To canonize his thought, the CCP published in May 1944 the first compilation of his works in the Jin-Cha-Ji Border Region for cadre study. A precursor to *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* (*Mao Zedong xuanji*), it represented the extent

to which the party sought to indoctrinate its intellectuals and new recruits. It also circulated “Documents of the Rectification Campaign” (*Zhengfeng wenxian*), which included essays by Mao and Liu Shaoqi to direct “incorrect” thoughts toward proper principles. Over time, once-ordinary comrades transformed into resolute comrades ready to lay down life and limb for their charismatic, august storyteller-cosmocrat capable of “translating specific events into surrogates for his own mythologic.”⁶⁸

In sum, Mao used Sinification to mobilize the rank and file and to recruit new followers. Mao and his disciples vacillated between the currents that were the underpinnings of the CCP vanguard and its modern program for Communist revolution to garner the necessary human resources to seize state power. Mao as symbol and political center emerged as “the correct interpreter of the past” and established the “necessary ‘symbolic capital’ to enhance his own status” as the Chinese revolution’s *primus inter pares*, then “supreme leader and interpreter.” He and his loyalists proceeded to weed out rivals and retain only a legion of devoted followers. Through Rectification’s process of “exegetical bonding,” Mao guided new believers’ transformation into devoted Maoists who held the Yan’an canon as Holy Scripture.⁶⁹ Mao successfully infused his own personal charisma into the impersonal Leninist Party at Yan’an, thereby establishing himself, the charismatic “man of prowess,” as the exemplar.⁷⁰

Mao now stood alone as the gold standard of an ideal revolutionary and theoretical architect. By crushing opposing lines of thinking that challenged ideological harmony, Mao Zedong Thought became the CCP’s ideological pillar; questioning Mao became tantamount to holding incorrect thought and a mistaken line. Mao’s accession to undisputed leadership occurred in March 1943 when he won the deciding vote in the CCP three-man secretariat and Mao Zedong Thought started to be bandied about by his fellow ranking leaders to package the local success of Yan’an Rectification for replication in other base areas. After the CCP founded the PRC in 1949, Mao’s symbolic and charismatic capital ultimately operated as a validation for party policies, especially those that did not play out in implemented form the way that Mao had either envisioned or theorized previously.

The Leninist Response: Mao’s Implementation of Traveling Theory

At the CCP’s April 1945 Seventh National Congress, Mao provided a comprehensive political report that detailed his vision for China, which he pledged would develop into “an independent, free, democratic, unified, prosperous,

and powerful new nation.”⁷¹ The party had not expected victory when it won in 1949, and although it had experience governing large numbers of people in base areas (*genjudi*), many of its leaders and cadres did not know how to govern people in cities, both large and small.⁷² Initially, the Party Center relied heavily on the Soviet model of authoritarian total governance (Soviet state socialism) to guide it but turned to implementing novel ideas as governing policies that could launch China’s transition to an industrialized socialist society.

This section has two goals: to show how ideology and practice of the 1949–1965 period came to be, and to explain the implementation stage of the expanded traveling theory model as a process whereby Mao Zedong Thought manifested in practiced policies in China before the Cultural Revolution. Much of the philosophical basis for Mao Zedong Thought of the Yan’an period—the pervasiveness of contradictions in society and the Marxist theory of historical change, for instance—was mainstream in the 1950s and 1960s. Yet Mao and the CCP adapted Mao Zedong Thought when in power to suit China’s changing situation, and in so doing, deviated from his Yan’an approach.⁷³ Pre-1949 Mao Zedong Thought was formulated in a fundamentally competitive environment wherein China’s future ruler had yet to be determined and civilians could, and did, defect from the CCP to the GMD. After the foundation of the PRC, however, the CCP government stood unrivaled, with less pressure on the Party Center altogether. I contrast the Mao Zedong Thought of Yan’an (Yan’an Maoism) before CCP state power with its development into conflictual yet overlapping strands during the CCP’s implementation of his thought and concomitant modernizing initiatives.

The story of the PRC’s early years has been refined usefully by previous studies that help us gain a clearer picture of the implementation phase of traveling theory. Frederick Teiwes challenges the argument that Mao and his radical loyalists “won” a two-line struggle against Liu Shaoqi’s conservative CCP clique. He proposes instead that a dominant Mao was, at times, radical and conservative, and that his oscillation characterized this period.⁷⁴ Timothy Cheek uses Jowitt’s analysis of Leninist parties to frame Yan’an Maoism’s initial success in uniting Chinese leadership under Mao and the later bifurcation of Mao Zedong Thought into charismatic and bureaucratic tendencies.⁷⁵ Jowitt’s description of the charismatic leader as a “revolutionary agent” who is capable of reconciling previously “incompatible commitments and orientations . . . into a new unit of personal identity and organizational membership” captures the phenomenon of Yan’an Maoism and its resonating power during the 1940s.⁷⁶

However, the pressures of ruling China—and unignorable issues of bureaucratization, ossification, and the reproduction of “classes,” *inter alia*, that were

antithetical to Maoism even in its Yan'an incarnation—pulled these once integrated strands apart. This fracture was compounded further by policies of repression and intraparty disunity.⁷⁷ The triumph of the charismatic faith Maoism and sublimation of Yan'an Maoism characterized the Cultural Revolution. Although it brought the party to its knees, the CCP exported this Maoism to countries such as Cambodia.

Consolidation: Ensuring Revolutionary Leadership, 1946–1959

Emblematic of the consolidation phase in Mao's implementation of traveling theory, the Land Reform movement and Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries stood as CCP efforts to deliver on its promise to its peasant base and crush potential enemies of the party-state. The Hundred Flowers and Anti-Rightist Campaigns embodied Mao's autocratic turn and widened the gap between Mao Zedong Thought's predominant tendencies. The CCP's approach with Hundred Flowers, in particular, is indicative of its establishment of a "charismatic (not legal) type of impersonal institutional framework at all levels and in all sectors in society," but drawing from the disjointed intellectual class rather than peasants for common service to China.⁷⁸

Unlike Yan'an Rectification's heroic mission, unexpected intellectual criticisms in the high tide of Hundred Flowers in May 1957 led Mao to have an "abrupt volte-face," resulting in the CCP purging critics with the Anti-Rightist campaign in June of that year.⁷⁹ Mao began to take criticism personally and responded with disproportionate reprisal to consolidate his position as the CCP's preeminent force. The post-Leap era was one in which any criticisms of party actions and policies were on par with levying personal attacks on Mao, the prodigious paterfamilias of the masses. Because of this autocratic turn, this section lays the groundwork for comparison between CCP rectification methods and those of the CPK, which sought to reform cadres during its struggle of the mid-1960s and, later, intellectuals in the party's first year in power.

Phase One: The Land Reform Movement, 1946–1948

Land reform was one of the CCP's top priorities in implementing socialism in China, as peasants constituted much of the population within and outside the liberated zones. For decades, most peasants were either tenants on the land that they tilled or they owned it outright, and they exchanged crops for silver

to pay landlords and state taxes. Despite their status as unbound to landlord estates, however, the village-based, networks-dominated rural economy had entrenched a largely independent local elite (landowners, merchants, and retired officials) between the Chinese state and the rural sector.

The CCP had been engaged in land reform since the late 1920s and had undertaken a violent “agrarian revolution” (*tudi geming*) during the Jiangxi Soviet era (1931–1934). It followed up with a protracted moderate program of “reducing rent and interest” (*jianzu jianxi*; not to confiscate landlords’ lands but to reduce their exploitation) during the Second Sino-Japanese War (a.k.a. Anti-Japanese Resistance War, 1937–1945). In wartime, the CCP emphasized a united front even as it built its new political and economic institutions from the ground up. The next, radical phase—the Land Reform movement (1946–1948) in northern China—completely broke with previous policies and wiped out all local elites as the CCP delivered on its promise to uplift its poor constituents and punish oppressors. This radical chapter thus constitutes phase one of consolidation, which by its end resulted in the CCP establishment of an unmediated state wherein it was the sole political power in the countryside.⁸⁰

The party’s attempt to tear down the united front that it established during the Second Sino-Japanese War and to strengthen its control over liberated zones, the radical phase of the Land Reform movement began with Mao’s May 1946 call for “heightened class struggle” in the countryside. The Party Center aimed to spur land confiscations from “large landlords,” “evil gentry,” and “tyrants” and to redistribute the land to the poorest strata in Communist-held areas in northern China. It envisioned land redistributions as fundamental to the realization of a “more egalitarian society” free from rural poverty and to the establishment of party control over the rural sector in north China through taxation (money or kind). CCP-designated work teams turned up in some villages to resolve the undesirable condition of land reform and to classify locals into groups of landlords (though many villages housed “no significant landholding class”), wealthy peasants, middle peasants, poor peasants, and rural workers.⁸¹

Land reform moved “in a more radical direction” with the 10 October 1947 Draft Land Reform Law (*tudi gaigefa cao’an*), which was marked by the CCP leadership’s “distrust of base-level Party organizations” and enthusiastic call for poor peasants to increase their direct action.⁸² The radicalized tenor spurred local activists to bouts of episodic violence against landlords. The CCP undercut its own devotion to steady agricultural production by “blurring the lines” between the wealthiest landlords and peasants, and upper-middle peasants, which leveled local financial networks and relationships. Although in the

ramped-up phase the CCP targeted wealthy middle peasants (*fuyu zhongnong*), it urged the protection of “mid-middle peasants” (*zhong zhongnong*) and “low-middle peasants” (*xia zhongnong*).⁸³ Despite plans to initiate a new stage of land reform in the CCP’s northeast base areas, it had to halt the movement because of conflict and violence. The party deemed the violence as disproportionate and disruptive and levied accusations against peasant activists for “indiscriminate killings” and “leftist deviations.”⁸⁴ As the Party Center and Northeast Bureau (*Zhonggong zhongyang dongbeiju*) reestablished control over activists in early 1948, it effectively ended the radical phase.⁸⁵

Despite its disruptions, the radical phase of land reform successfully upended social and economic systems and established brand new political and economic institutions that were linked directly to the peasantry. In breaking up large landholdings in base areas and crushing local elites, the radical phase’s primary target, landlords (2.5 percent), was “practically eliminated as a social group in many areas.” The CCP also successfully restructured the relationship between the state and the rural sector. Revenue from taxation, whether in monies, grain, or otherwise, opened the door for the party-state to exchange surpluses with Moscow for industrial machinery.⁸⁶ Although the CCP expanded the Land Reform movement, first southward, then nationwide, just before the Korean War in June 1950 with the Land Reform Law (*tudi gaige fa*), violent excesses led it to shift to a more moderate way to implement land reform.⁸⁷

This first phase of consolidation, importantly, entailed filling the power vacuum in the rural sector (left open by local elites) with proven cadres who came to constitute an unmediated state. Work teams occupied these new roles as rural cadres’ presence in villages alongside activists turned party elites dealt the final blow to traditional elites. They acted as state-rural intermediaries and contributed to the furtherance of the CCP’s “cultural nexus of power” in rural China.⁸⁸ This was because cadres’ arrival with orders from Beijing disrupted local networks of scholar-elites, merchants, and intermediaries who had long held a tight grip on the rural economy and society as “brokers between the state and the peasants.”⁸⁹

Resistance to taxes, however, threw into sharp relief the reality that peasants were too difficult to harness as a revolutionary force. Only through economic reconfiguration and social transformation that reshaped everyday culture, replaced “feudalist exploitation” with egalitarian peasant communities, and eliminated extant hierarchies might peasants develop into a “more conducive” revolutionary force: state’s peasants (*guojiade nongmin*). These specific transformative changes to China’s rural sector accompanied the CCP’s economic reconfiguration program, the Great Leap Forward.⁹⁰

Phase Two: The Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries, 1950–1952

After establishing the PRC, the CCP was eager to initiate its program for socialist transition. But surges of rebellion by GMD loyalists threatened socialist edification. The Liu Shaoqi–led CCP Central Committee issued two directives in March 1950 that the party hoped would “out” and punish former GMD members in urban and rural areas: (1) the Directive on the Elimination of Bandits and the Establishment of a Revolutionary New Order and (2) the Directive on Suppression of Counterrevolutionary Activities. The first, a campaign of “exhortation from above and reporting from below,” forced GMD remnants to surrender on the promise of lenience, though the Party Center identified a correlation between GMD counterattacks and lighter CCP punishments. Peng Zhen argued, “Our lenient policies in many places have deviated toward another mistake of ‘lenience without bounds’ . . . that has swollen the enemy’s arrogance and alienated the people.”⁹¹ Mao was initially hesitant; to “strike in all directions” and “make too many enemies” might compromise the CCP’s already “fraught” relationship with the national bourgeoisie—not to mention its less-favorable economic situation represented a genuine obstacle to implementing such a large-scale campaign.

The Party Center then initiated the second, the PRC’s first political campaign, on 23 July 1950. Initially hesitant but now approving of the campaign, Mao personally oversaw its “double-ten directive” (*shuangshi zhishi*). As he insisted, the outbreak of the Korean War provided an unmissable opportunity: “[We] must not miss this . . . golden opportunity. Full advantage of this asset must be taken. The purpose is not just to kill several counterrevolutionaries . . . [it] is for mass mobilization.”⁹² Mass mobilization was one of the main impetuses for the campaign, and one that included newspapers publicizing front-page reports of anti-counterrevolutionary violence and executions to “educate” the masses. But specifics on how to detain and execute suspected counterrevolutionaries were limited. Liu Shaoqi feared that the campaign may go off the rails, and rightly so; in only a few years the CCP had arrested (*guanya*), confined (*guanazhi*), and executed (*sha*) “tens of thousands” to “several million” counterrevolutionaries in an “atmosphere of fear and paranoia.” The CCP urged cadres to ensure that they clearly understood their order and, in Mao’s parlance, “stick strictly to it” lest counterrevolutionaries seize upon excesses to turn the public mandate against the party.⁹³

As CCP countermeasures failed to satisfy the Party Center, the CCP ramped up executions and publicized successful endeavors thereof, again to educate the masses. On 17 January 1951, Mao read a report that detailed the 27th Army’s

execution of 4,600 “bandit leaders, local tyrants and GMD secret agents” in several counties in western Hunan, where the local government was set to kill “several thousand more counterrevolutionaries.” This result was especially important for the CCP’s purposes. Party control over many parts of China was new and land redistribution comparatively peaceful, but vestiges of landlord power in the rural sector remained a threat. Mao cautioned again that “if we are irresolute and tolerant to this evil, we will . . . alienate the people . . . [in areas] where bandits are rampant, local tyrants are numerous and secret agents exist in high concentration.” Mao proposed, with Party Center backing, executions-by-quota. As in Hunan, he demanded that a “number of large-scale executions should be carried out,” and in so doing set a brutal benchmark for cadres to reach.⁹⁴ His 21 January telegram to the Shanghai Committee, another the following day to the South China Branch Bureau in Guangdong, and yet another on executions in Shanghai and Nanjing further explain his directives.

Executions-by-quota also distinguished an in-group (revolutionary groups) from an out-group (counterrevolutionaries). Hard-liners of the latter category, Mao held, accounted for only a fraction of a percent of the PRC’s population (0.1 percent). Its annihilation would therefore eliminate all counterrevolutionaries and not erupt into wanton executions of innocent persons. A special Party Center meeting soon ratified Mao’s executions-by-quota plan for local cadres to implement with varied scales relative to regions, but using 0.1 percent “as a standard,” to “execute half of this figure first, and then wait and see how the situation develops.”⁹⁵

The CCP Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries successfully eliminated GMD remnants, insurgencies, and assassinations and delivered a death-blow to the reinstatement of Nationalist Party rule. The campaign also cemented the Party Center view that the “revolutionary state” ought to direct class analysis and struggle, and laid the groundwork for further consolidation with the 1957 Anti-Rightist campaign and, later, the social transformation and revolutionary perpetuation that featured in the Cultural Revolution. Executions-by-quota set the stage for further mass campaigns of anti-counterrevolutionary repression explored below. Mao and the Party Center “assigned quotas to lower levels [as] criteria for inspection and [to measure] fulfillment of campaign goals, thus establishing a set of bureaucratic incentives that could easily displace the very goals the campaign hoped to fulfill.” The campaign ultimately consolidated CCP authority by stamping out rival remnants, mobilizing the masses in support of CCP policies, and “paving the way for a subsequent series of historical tragedies.”⁹⁶

The initial two phases of consolidation are especially important to our understanding of similarities between the two case studies under analysis. Both

highlight the significance of targeting those elements the ruling parties deemed as unsavory, consolidating an in-group, and suppressing opposition in the early establishment of a revolutionary regime.

Phase Three: The Hundred Flowers and Anti-Rightist Campaigns, 1956–1959

The CCP returned to rectification with the suppression of intellectual critics during the Three- and Five-Antis (*Sanfan Wufan*). The Hundred Flowers campaign signaled Mao's authoritarian turn, which was spurred by internal and external factors. The early 1950s had been banner years during which the party claimed success in suppressing counterrevolutionaries, unifying China, elevating living standards and income, and improving life expectancy. Although the First Five-Year Plan ("Little Leap," 1953–1957) ended with mediocre harvest yields, early CCP rule became a point of pride in official CCP historiography.⁹⁷ The Hungarian revolt, harsh Soviet repression, and subsequent execution of revolutionary leader Imre Nagy (1896–1958), however, led Mao to identify "human error" within the Soviet approach despite supporting Moscow's decision.⁹⁸ In a 1956 speech at the CCP's Eighth National Congress, Mao iterated that Chinese "should learn from [the Soviet Union's] advanced and not its backward experience. . . . Some people are so indiscriminating that they say a Russian fart is fragrant. That too is subjectivism. The Russians themselves say it stinks. Therefore, we should be analytical."⁹⁹

Timing was a key factor in this realization. The Little Leap and Hungarian revolt occurred when in China, increased mass mobilization from 1955 to early 1956, and again from late 1957 to mid-1960, clashed with the CCP's "sober" calls for balance in the 1956–1957 "anti-rash advance" (*fannaojin*) period. Its relationship with the intellectual and artistic communities was already on shaky ground because there was less mobility for the intelligentsia to be innovative after the foundation of the PRC. This culminated in significant opposition to the CCP repression of intellectual criticism beginning in January 1956 and continuing until the Great Leap. Amid work stoppages in major centers and a need to foster party-populace cooperation, another rectification movement was difficult to avoid despite opposition to Mao's clarion call for it in 1956.¹⁰⁰

The CCP intended the Hundred Flowers campaign to generate enthusiasm for the party in promoting progress in arts and sciences, developing a genuine socialist culture, and urging critics to voice their opinions freely.¹⁰¹ Its impetus was Mao Zedong Thought's philosophical premise that contradictions are universal and the drivers behind all change as Mao had formulated in Yan'an.¹⁰²

Mao's four-hour speech on 27 February 1957 at the Eleventh Session of the Supreme State Conference addressed such contradictions and correct socialist development. He asserted that, as opposed to the "antagonistic" contradictions between the CCP and enemies, contradictions between leaders and followers were "non-antagonistic" in nature. Contradictions, he intimated, would permeate regardless of China's transition to socialism. But nonantagonistic ones between the government and its people, leaders and led, could become antagonistic if unresolved.¹⁰³ Against his colleagues' wishes to limit the campaign to the CCP apparatus, Mao urged that it was "necessary to mobilize the CCP's populist tradition" through encouraging the people to voice their concerns so the party could earnestly serve the people.¹⁰⁴

By "letting a hundred flowers blossom, letting a hundred schools of thought contend" in arts and literature, the CCP hoped to "cultivate that little flower for everybody to see, [and the] people can also criticize flowers." Targets of the party's ire were "poisonous weeds," but Mao recognized that identifying and eliminating all "weeds" was impossible; the party and people would still need to learn how to root them out.¹⁰⁵ The campaign soon pitted "redness" against "expertness" in the CCP bureaucracy.¹⁰⁶ Mao's bold challenge to critics was for them to "dare to write" not unlike the "genuine Marxist" Lu Xun.

Nonparty circles of scientists and engineers could express their ideas without CCP interference in theory, but in practice harsh repression of intellectuals and peasants followed and remained in effect until the 1957 third plenum. Dissenting opinion that intellectuals and workers directed at the CCP—whether critical of its *raison d'être*, the legality of its hold on state authority, cadre corruption, its treatment of peasants and workers, or its handling of educational policy—brought about repression by early June 1957.¹⁰⁷ The legacy of the Hundred Flowers campaign hinged on Mao's and the CCP's stress on recuperating those whose minds needed rectification in light of their incorrect thinking and rightist tendencies. Open criticism without fear of harsh reprisal resulted from the party's miscalculation. Millions of old-guard intellectuals and bourgeois, the Party Center urged, should work with the CCP. "If people have committed mistakes," Mao reasoned, "we must adopt a policy of 'punishing those who have erred in the past [to] provide a warning for the future, and *curing the disease to save the patient*,' thus helping them to reform."¹⁰⁸

Criticism was not, in theory, offside. "The criticisms made by most people are valid. . . . They are making their criticisms in the hope of improving their relations with us, so these criticisms are well-intentioned." The problem, however, was that in practice, "rightists' criticisms" were at once "malicious" and "antagonistic," as they stood as "poisonous weeds . . . growing side by side

with fragrant flowers and ghosts and monsters appearing together with the unicorn and phoenix.”¹⁰⁹ Despite what party leaders were telling Mao, he believed until mid-May 1957 that the intellectuals would criticize bureaucracy but not him or the CCP. Upon hearing intellectuals’ and low-level party workers’ harsh criticisms, he labeled them as “rightists” and sentenced them to reeducation through labor (*laodong jiaoyang*). Amid large work stoppages, notably the 1957 strike wave in Shanghai, and increased anti-CCP attacks, the Party Center aborted Hundred Flowers in June 1957.¹¹⁰

The Hundred Flowers campaign ended abruptly with the initiation of the repressive Anti-Rightist campaign to rein in intellectual dissent. The CCP expanded targets to include urban intellectuals and “rural rightists” who opposed accelerated collectivization. Because the CCP had mishandled the contradiction between the party and intellectuals, Mao urged that it had become “antagonistic” and thus “necessitated recourse to force.”¹¹¹ Its purpose, then, was “to put non-Marxist things and *poisonous weeds* in front of the comrades and the non-Party people so as to temper everyone. Otherwise they will only know Marxism and nothing else, and that [would not] be good. It is like a smallpox vaccination [that] causes struggle inside the human body and produces immunity.”¹¹² Deng Xiaoping led the campaign, and during its first phase it targeted rural rightists who criticized the CCP’s land, livestock, and property collectivization programs.¹¹³

The Anti-Rightist campaign’s second phase, though, further alienated the party from intellectuals, as it moved forward after a major locus of intraparty contestation at the 1959 July–August Lushan conference. After Lushan, the harmonious unity within the CCP was becoming unglued. Members’ freedom to criticize party policies (“Inner-Party democracy”) to others was over.¹¹⁴ Although CCP anti-intellectual campaigns had precedents in Mao’s Yan’an thinking, the forces at play, both external and internal, gave them their harsh and totalistic character. The call for criticism was well intentioned, yet the repression of critics revealed that the CCP neither expected nor valued so much negative feedback.

The Hundred Flowers and Anti-Rightist campaigns, as well as the earlier Land Reform movement and Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries, reflected the CCP’s efforts to consolidate its power against subversive forces. They also set an example for foreign acolytes to follow. Edgar Faure, a French politician and essayist, claimed that “one must be Chinese, and, without doubt, also a good Communist to understand them [the Hundred Flowers campaign and others in China]. At least, one must have been in China, as I was able to be . . . to understand what one does not understand.”¹¹⁵ But one did not need to be Chinese to comprehend that the motive behind these rectification efforts

was control. CPK Maoists also coveted the consolidation of party rule during their pursuit of socialist edification. The CPK leadership suspected that Khmer Republic loyalists (supporters of the ancien régime) and other anti-Communist enemies were hiding in plain sight. Though the revolution had toppled the reactionary “feudalists and the capitalists,” their “specific traits of contradiction . . . still exist[ed] in policy, in consciousness, in standpoint and class rage.”¹¹⁶

Economic Reconfiguration: The Great Leap Forward, 1958–1961

The economic reconfiguration phase of the CCP implementation of traveling theory took the form of a permanent revolution (*buduan geming*) in the economic and industrial sectors. Integral to understanding this phase of Mao Zedong Thought’s implementation is its transformation during and after the Great Leap. The CCP’s program for rapid economic and industrial development marked Mao’s transition from strong, attentive leadership and respect for CCP economic specialists to a more close-minded autocracy.¹¹⁷ As the charismatic leader of the Leninist organization, he and the Party Center mobilized millions of peasants and workers into service for his ambitious development program.

The period after consolidation’s three phases, however, was “a time of ideological confusion.” Mao had lost his contemporaries’ confidence, yet the Party Center sought his endorsement of policy decisions instead of voicing opposition. The Great Leap’s continuation shattered the Yan’an Maoist line, as ardent Mao supporters now competed for his favor against critical CCP figures, and this tendency featured prominently in Mao Zedong Thought as implemented thereafter. The Great Leap stood as the major turning point in the party’s internal ideological schism. Its failure engendered the subsequent emergence of faith Maoism, or Mao Zedong Thought bifurcated from its Yan’an accretion into sometimes-overlapping, yet nonetheless conflictual, strands.¹¹⁸

In 1958, the CCP launched the Great Leap Forward to “surpass Great Britain and catch up with the US” (*chao-Ying gan-Mei*) in steel output and to “dash into Communism” (*paobu jinru gongchanzhuyi*).¹¹⁹ Autarky characterized it from the onset, but the Leap was more than simply an isolated, self-dependent, and rapid attempt to increase industrial and agricultural output. The Leap instead represented the CCP’s effort to subvert bureaucracy and elitism to distance itself from the Soviet model of economic development. To accomplish this clean break, the Party Center ordered an attack on middle administrators, national bureaucrats, and other professionals and sent cadres to lead work units among the masses. Policy-relevant actors broadened, incorporating previously

peripheral low-level organs, and the state set production quotas that bordered on implausible. Such efforts were the CCP's attempt to "join top and bottom directly . . . in [an] intimate relationship, bypassing the professionals who earlier stood between them."¹²⁰ Mao's command of the economy was very hands-on. Any dissent against the Leap's orchestration was futile. Whether a success or a failure of catastrophic proportions, the Great Leap rested squarely on Mao's shoulders as its principal and most enthusiastic architect.

Mao and the CCP thought that the Great Leap could live up to its lofty ambitions in contravention to the conventional Marxist theory that developments in the forces of production caused radical changes in class relations of production and superstructure. Mao's "distinctive understanding and deployment of the categories of the political economy of Marxism," scholars argue, underpinned his program for hastened economic advance.¹²¹ As the Leap neared the end of its first year, however, the CCP's frenzied approach to accelerated development, which urged workers to endure "hard work for a few years, be happy for a thousand," took on a cautious tenor.¹²² Despite Mao's reduced supervisory role, he became interested in economic questions and cautioned in a May 1958 speech that the Leap "should not be pushed too urgently. The students of red and expert schools dozed off in class. . . . We must not push too hard."¹²³ Thus, the early stage of the Leap's economic policy-making was characterized by the Party Center's proactive and polemical approach.

The Party Center's late 1958 enacting of policies to confront the Leap's problems and admission that its accelerated nature was detrimental rather than favorable are emblematic of this initial cautious stance.¹²⁴ So too were CCP grants of measured freedoms to peasants to maintain possession of their homes and private property. Mao expressed as much in the Sixth Plenum of the Eighth Central Committee speech "Resolution on Several Problems of People's Communes."

Early caution notwithstanding, several factors led to the Great Leap's abject failure. It did not reach its unrealistic production quotas, and the People's Communes initiative to unite previously separate production brigades failed to generate the production yields that the Party Center envisioned. Backyard furnaces only produced pig iron of such poor quality that much of it was useless. Open competition from local leaders soon led to the establishment of a tournament system (*jinyinbiaosai tizhi*) in which local governments "competed against each other by setting high targets and by mobilizing social and economic resources fully" to achieve "high performance indicators of political loyalty."¹²⁵ Although this system was to increase production yields through healthy competition, cadres and local leaders lied about outputs to get closer

to Mao and to gain local cadres' favor. Widespread malpractice led to misinformation about production and reporting inflated numbers to the party, which played a major part in masking the Great Leap's catastrophe in the countryside.¹²⁶

As the Great Leap's principal advocate, Mao had to fall on his sword. He was not alone in taking the blame, though his CCP leaders "were accessories to all that, but accessories after the fact."¹²⁷ The CCP's June Resolution may cast Mao's responsibility for the Great Leap and its aftermath as merely *primus inter pares*, but undoubtedly sans Mao, no Great Leap, People's Communes, mass steel output campaign, or revival of the Leap program would have occurred.¹²⁸ Because of the Leap's massive strain, Mao disregarded the harmonious enmeshment of class and status in the charismatic-impersonal party of Jowitt's Leninist organization. In turn, he and the Party Center had abrogated a balanced approach to development in attempting single-step socialism.¹²⁹ The CCP's aim to outdo England and catch up to the US in production came at the expense of ameliorating China's agricultural output after the Little Leap, and it ostracized instead of engaged with Mao critics' concerns dialogically. Although the Party Center may have pushed for greater attention to objective conditions, its relentless pursuit of unmatched economic and industrial progress underwrote claims of success in all fields. The Great Leap ultimately symbolized the CCP shift to bypassing stages of socialist development and ignoring agricultural needs.

Importantly, in the Great Leap's wake Yan'an Maoism had broken into conflictual Maoist lines. Many CCP officials held feelings of "confusing ambivalence" in the Great Leap's aftermath, and gone were the days of reasoned approaches and analyses, encouraging even-handed debate (even if empty), and respectful criticism.¹³⁰ Because the CCP's inability to nourish the people and safeguard their well-being caused Mao to lose the proverbial mandate of heaven (*tianming*), his legitimacy as supreme leader was up for intense debate. He turned to increasingly autocratic methods to justify his position. The Great Leap's catastrophic consequences paired with the unease shared by many CCP functionaries over his unceremonious dismissal of respected Yan'an mainstays (notably Peng Dehuai and Zhang Wentian) to shatter Yan'an Maoism.¹³¹

Social Transformation: The SEM and Rise of Faith Maoism, 1963–1965

The retrenchment period that began in July 1960 signaled the end of the perilous Great Leap Forward, and, between the spring of 1961 and January 1962,

the CCP shifted away from criticism of it. Mao remained at the center of party politics, but some officials now believed he could not be trusted with major policy decisions. Others heralded Mao despite his failures, holding his counsel as *verbum legis*. Policy debate in the Party Center resembled a “dysfunctional family of an alcoholic stepfather (drunk with supreme power) in which siblings vie for fickle affections of the patriarch, divine his erratic desires, avoid his capricious wrath, and survive by blaming others.”¹³²

In this context, two predominant strains of Mao Zedong Thought emerged from the ashes of the once united Yan’an Maoism: a faith Maoism propounded by Defense Minister and Mao’s “close comrade-in-arms” (*Qinmi zhanyou*) Lin Biao, and the Maoism forged in Yan’an held by Mao’s party critics.¹³³ The 30 January 7,000 Cadre Conference (*Qiqianren dahui*), a watershed in Mao’s “loss of confidence” in Liu Shaoqi, underscores the post-Leap break that evolved into competing Maoist camps.¹³⁴ The final break occurred against the backdrop of the CCP’s social transformation phase of implementation: the Socialist Education Movement (SEM, 1963–1966) to rectify millions of Chinese peasants.

The CCP’s aim for the SEM was for it to crush corruption and “capitalist tendencies” first in the rural communes, and then within the party. But it evolved into an aggressive campaign, “Destroy the Four Olds and Cultivate the Four News” (*po sijiu li sixin*), whereby a new revolutionary culture was to replace old customs, culture, habits, and ideas.¹³⁵ In the SEM’s failure, the balance of charismatic and rational-bureaucratic strands of the Leninist Party in Yan’an Maoism that the Leap strained and pulled apart further was now fervently oppositional. This section examines the latest of the CCP’s rectification campaigns and tracks the final stages of Mao Zedong Thought’s transformation into the ideology that Pol Pot encountered in 1965–1966.

The SEM was a prime example of the social transformation phase of the expanded model because of its penetration into rural society after the Great Leap had undone much of the party’s headway there with the Land Reform movement. Mao advocated for a permanent revolution to restore peasants’ confidence in collectivism by broadening the Anti-Rightist movement so that it attacked exploitative forces of capitalism in the countryside: rich and middle peasants (the latter remained prominent).¹³⁶ His “impassioned plea” to “Never Forget Class Struggle!” at the September 1962 Central Committee of the CCP’s Tenth Plenum led the party to wage class struggle and reform productive and administrative units in the rural communes.¹³⁷ The peasants’ lack of enthusiasm for ever-corrupt rural cadres’ arguments, however, led to debate on how to fix this problem.¹³⁸

Before the SEM, the CCP convened to address China’s post-Leap economic situation, where Mao claimed, “Any mistakes the Centre has made ought to

be my direct responsibility, and I have also an indirect share in the blame because I am the Chairman of the Central Committee.”¹³⁹ Mao’s “self-criticism” is indicative of his retrenchment era shift, and subsequently, four voices shared their opinions.¹⁴⁰ Then-president Liu Shaoqi opened with an official government report. He forewarned attendees of China’s dire situation, criticized Mao’s “new formulations,” commented on his phrase of “nine fingers to one” (*yigen zhitou yu jiugen zhitou*), and argued that such a formula “diminished the severity of the situation that the country was facing.” Liu suggested instead that it was “seven to three” (*qigen zhitou yu sangen zhitou*) because the disaster resulted from flawed development programs and natural disasters rather than purely Mao’s or the Party Center’s mismanagement. Mayor of Beijing Peng Zhen followed, blaming the Central Committee, Politburo, and Mao for the Great Leap’s failures. Mao, he charged, was “personally responsible” for the “calamitous” grain situation.¹⁴¹

Next was Defense Minister Lin Biao, whose bellicose speech ignored the Leap’s economic consequences and lauded Mao’s thought as the guiding light that, if left alone, would usher in an era of successful work.¹⁴² Mao referred to Lin’s pronouncement as a “wonderful and heavy piece of oratory” and recommended its dissemination among cadres for inspirational purposes.¹⁴³ The final speaker, Premier Zhou Enlai, acknowledged his responsibility for the Great Leap’s failures but invoked the axiom “to seek truth from facts” (*shishi qiushi*) to refocus everyone’s attention on the daunting task of China’s economic recovery and how to achieve it, and away from a Mao-Liu feud.

The conference concluded with lines drawn in the sand. Mao distanced himself from Liu afterward, whereas Peng Zhen surprisingly did not come under fire from the Party Center until after the Cultural Revolution was under way. The conference signaled the emergence of Lin Biao’s en vogue faith Maoists, as his adulatory pronouncement stood as a microcosm of faith Maoism taking hold of the Party Center, Mao chief among them. The discordant opinions expressed at the meeting ultimately represent the origins of the Cultural Revolution.

The SEM began with the May 1963 First Ten Points, or Former Ten Points (*Qian shitiao*), and Four Cleanups (*Siqing yundong*), which established a revolutionary class army to investigate how local cadres handled supplies, balanced accounts, allocated work points, and maintained warehouses and granaries.¹⁴⁴ It was initially a composite of three campaigns: (1) an educational campaign for nonparty rural masses; (2) the urban Five-Antis (*wufan*) campaign against so-called bourgeois elements and attitudes; and (3) the Four Cleanups campaign to “cleanse” rural party cadres’ reactionary thinking and behavior. The

SEM also entailed a ramped-up CCP effort to classify and register ordinary peasants.¹⁴⁵

The party's September 1963 Later Ten Points (*Hou shitiao*) by General Secretary Deng Xiaoping, and their revision by Liu Shaoqi one year later, attempted to remedy the situation. These points acknowledged that Mao's suggestions had merit and simultaneously curbed the movement's radicalism and scope through greater centralization. Liu's revised points, in particular, forced teams to spend half-years rebuilding rural administrations, dismissed the CCP's earlier leniency toward corrupt rural cadres and rich and middle peasants, and treated even minor peasant complaints with investigation or reprisal. The SEM rectification campaign had thus rendered nugatory any effort to disseminate Mao's concerns about revisionism and shifted to regulating the rural party apparatus.¹⁴⁶

Political differences were at the heart of such disunity and marked the SEM from the beginning. Liu Shaoqi, for one, desired a change of course and was unafraid of challenging Mao—who had largely been excluded from actual governing since the 1959 Lushan Conference—on issues of the SEM's implementation. Before its launch, Liu's policy of rationalization and stress on organization in preference to ideology had significant party backing. The policy on private plots, free markets, small private enterprises, and production quotas ("three freedoms and one guarantee"; *sanzi yibao*), however, had established a rich-peasant economy that caused some concern over how private ownership and independent entrepreneurship had resurfaced as obstacles. A rich-peasant economy stood in contravention to the CCP's preferred collective economy and occluded the lower peasant strata rather than included them. Liu and his CCP comrades held that the SEM ought to attack corruption, whereas Mao believed that the SEM's primary focus ought to be the rectification of "revisionist" tendencies among cadres and peasants, with "local radicals" implementing it. Mao's and Liu's competing ideas on how to address rural cadre corruption and three major resolutions—the Former Ten Points, Later Ten Points, and Revised Ten Points—thus caused considerable contention over the means by which to implement the SEM.¹⁴⁷

The ensuing January 1965 Twenty-Three Points (*Ershisan tiao*) redirected the SEM to attacking corruption in the realms of politics, ideology, organization, and economics within the Party Center. Mao railed against those CCP authorities who seemingly opposed the party's political line as "degenerate elements," and broadened the definition of class enemies to include officials who, he charged, had taken "the capitalist road" in "oppos[ing] socialism." Liu was the most notable target; Mao used the new Twenty-Three Points as a

“formal critique” of policies that Liu and his wife, Wang Guangmei (1921–2006), had overseen during the SEM. Among Mao’s criticisms were that Liu had deprioritized the contradiction between the “four cleans” and the “four uncleanes” and that his approach to rooting out corruption among low-level members and rural cadres was non-Marxist. In 1967 Mao branded Liu as the nation’s “number one Party powerholder taking the capitalist road” for suppressing the masses.¹⁴⁸ Although a decision to purge Liu from the Party Center was not yet finalized, the stage was set for his removal the next year, though few could have predicted the radical tumult that followed.

Those ideological discussions and the political turmoil that were outgrowths of the SEM and marked the Maoism of the Cultural Revolution constituted an important juncture of the Kampucheanization of Maoism. Yan’an Maoism had taken a back seat to the faith Maoism that characterized Lin Biao’s zealotry, and as the subsequent chapter shows, this Maoism effectively “sold” Pol Pot on the idea that the Cambodian revolution ought to follow a Maoist path and, later, struggle permanently against enemy contradictions that might undermine the Cambodian movement’s revolutionary progress. By the time of Pol Pot’s December 1965 visit, Beijing’s radical climate was indeed underpinned by a “Maoism divided”; the CCP’s effort to mass-rectify throughout the rural communes occurred during a period of party disunity as it moved to cement faith Maoism as the foundation of the nation’s revolutionary animus. Lin Biao’s emergence brought to the Cambodian revolutionary the “justification to all of his arguments that had fallen on deaf ears in Vietnam.”¹⁴⁹ This radical climate continued to influence Maoist acolytes abroad after Pol Pot’s departure and into the DK years (1975–1979).

Although the SEM was another failure, it provided the justification for the turbulent Cultural Revolution to resolve errors and perpetuate the CCP’s revolution. Mao reflected on the disappointment in 1967: “In the past we waged struggles in rural areas, in factories, in the cultural field, and we carried out the socialist education movement. But all this failed to solve the problem because we did not find a form or a method to arouse the masses to expose our dark aspects openly, in an all-round way, and from below.”¹⁵⁰ Since Lin Biao’s supposed defection in 1971 to the Soviet Union (the infamous “Lin Biao Incident” [*Lin Biao shijian*]), the Cultural Revolution had lost momentum and a limited normalization of social life was discernible. This led to Deng Xiaoping’s 1973–1974 return to prominence from banishment to the countryside and his efforts to “bring order” to China by rectifying some of the Cultural Revolution’s excesses. But the Maoist hard-liners, four radicals on the new twenty-one-member Politburo with similar views and nicknamed the “Gang of Four” (*Sirenbang*)—“Madame Mao” Jiang Qing (1914–1991), Zhang Chunqiao (1917–

2005), Yao Wenyan (1931–2005), and Wang Hongwen (1935–1992)—responded with strong criticism of Deng. After the 1973 “Criticize Zhou Enlai” ten-day Politburo sessions attacking Zhou’s “right capitulationist” diplomacy, and early 1974 “Criticize Lin, Criticize Confucius” movement (*pi Lin pi Kong yundong*), the CCP in 1975 launched the campaign “Criticize Deng, Counterattack the Right-Deviationist Reversal-of-Verdicts Trend” (*pi Deng, fanji youqing fan’an feng*) to intensify Cultural Revolution rhetoric.¹⁵¹

Conclusion

Mao’s social experiences and written works provide equally enlightening perspectives on the emergence of Mao Zedong Thought and provide insight into how he grappled with a complex relationship between exogenous thought and its suitability for endogenous realities. His early years as a student tell us of his exposure to a plenitude of intellectual resources, both domestic and foreign, with Euro-American philosophical works joining his early exposure to the Confucian classics. This immersion, which was very much reflective of China’s own confrontation with its present changing situation, led him to realize the value of both Chinese philosophy and foreign thought such as Marxism. His time as a revolutionary, too, was a revelation, as he reported in 1927 on the peasants’ movement in Hunan the sheer untapped potential of China’s largest, yet socioeconomically poorest, demographic for effectuating real change in the failed republic. It was with this arrow in his intellectual quiver that Mao sought to develop a Marxism that “fit” these concrete realities in China.

Mao’s Yan’an works reflect the genius of his practical adaptation. His Yan’an-era essays addressed endemic contradictions in Chinese society and emphasized practice over abstraction. Both were at the core of Sinification, Mao’s adaptation of Marxism-Leninism into an ideological system with a built-in plan for socialist transition and invested with his personal charisma. Yan’an Rectification then elevated the notion of Mao as exemplar and paterfamilias of a party that needed a counterpunch to Chiang Kai-shek’s own 1943 overtures. Through exegetical bonding in Yan’an, Mao’s greatest essays and pronouncements became religious scripture, in a sense, as green recruits transformed into hardened, keen revolutionaries. But just when Mao Zedong Thought crystallized into an ideological system, it broke into two conflictual, albeit not always dichotomous, strands: bureaucratic Maoism and faith Maoism. The latter made disagreeing with Mao tantamount to treason and drove a massive wedge between the CCP leadership. As Mao Zedong Thought took on diametrically

opposed features—one holding aloft the Yan'an banner and another propelling forward Mao-centric zealotry—only one could, and would, remain. A series of cataclysmic events with disastrous results threatened to undo all that Mao and the CCP had achieved over decades of warfare and socialist transformation.

The processes of implementation converged as a response to the challenge of modernization. The CCP invested considerable thought and energy into breaking from the Soviet model of socialist development and believed that consolidating, reconfiguring, and transforming Chinese society could achieve it. Its efforts to garner intellectual feedback, though initially well intended, led to suppression that consolidated the party and its followers as the type of help that it sought. The Great Leap catastrophe and small dividends paid mirrored the more successful Soviet Five-Year Plans, although it encountered significant problems that undermined it. The post-Leap retrenchment period caused Mao to be “lessened,” yet he unquestionably remained the “father of the revolution”; to oppose him, “to ‘kill’ the father, [was] to kill something inside themselves.” The 7,000 Cadre Conference was a microcosm of this trend within the CCP, whereas the SEM’s emphasis on mass mobilization against anticorruption and political struggle (to the point of encouraging social upheaval) revealed itself as the Cultural Revolution’s dress rehearsal.

Mao’s “Last Revolution” put faith Maoism into practice; he and his devotees branded Liu Shaoqi as “revisionist” and purged him, whereas countless others within and outside the CCP shared similar or worse fates. The “shrill assertions of faith Maoism as the only Maoism in 1966,” Cheek opines, “completed the dissolution of the ‘symbolic capital’ of Yan’an Maoism” and ushered in an era during which faith Maoism *was* Maoism.¹⁵² In the sensationalist, adulatory idiom of Mao supporters, faith Maoism stood as a corrective; it was now the entire world’s revolutionary thought, and the CCP used the Cultural Revolution as a launchpad for its export as a global ideological system.

CHAPTER 2

Transmitting Maoism

Mao's Global Revolution, 1965–1975

All countries that are subject to US aggression should form the broadest possible united front to oppose the US imperialist policies of aggression and war and to safeguard world peace.

—Mao Zedong, statement in *People's Daily*

Concerning the great teacher Chairman Mao, cherish the word “loyalty.” Concerning the great “Mao Zedong Thought,” stress vigorously the word “usefulness.” (Dui weidade Mao Zedong zhuxi xinhuai yige “zhong” zi. Dui weidade Mao Zedong sixiang henzhua “yong” zi.)

—Cultural Revolution poster, 1967

The 1966–1976 Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was arguably the most catastrophic political event in the PRC's early history. It ushered in a decade during which Mao's adherents elevated his person and precepts as omniscient, unquestionable wisdom. At its onset, Lin Biao's faith Maoists formed the most influential group within the CCP and manifested their fundamentalist, effervescent zeal in Mao Zedong Thought. Senior officials fanned the flames of urban youth frustration through documents and speeches that endorsed ransacking “bad-class” households and “bourgeois” possessions, attacked the Four Olds (*sijiu*; old ideas, culture, customs, and habits), and called for staging public humiliations of “bad-class” residents. Party propaganda posters encouraged everyday people to “criticize the old world; build a new world with Mao Zedong Thought as a weapon” (*yi Mao Zedong sixiang weiwuqi, pipan jiushijie, jianshe xinshijie*), and politicized students turned Red Guards formed an army of zealots willing to proselytize in the name of Chairman Mao.¹

Amid this maelstrom of Mao-centric iconoclasm, China's foreign policy took on a global character. Policymakers shifted PRC foreign policy from

participation in the Communist and nonaligned world movements (mid to late 1950s) to Third World leadership (1960s). Mao envisioned the establishment of a model informed by the CCP's historic victory that other countries could follow. He seized on shifting relations with Moscow to set an ideological example—Red Evangelism—for colonized and independent nations that stressed the worldwide suitability of China's revolutionary experience.²

In the years following the Sino-Soviet Split (1960), Mao and the CCP actively exported the Chinese revolution to the world (see figure 2.1). Beijing's truly global initiative represents the transmission stage of the expanded traveling theory model.³ Three salient dimensions of this stage are as follows: (1) export, comprising international diplomacy, welcoming foreign revolutionaries like Pol Pot to China, and mass translation and dissemination of *Quotations of Chairman Mao* (*Mao zhuxi yulu*); (2) the content of Mao Zedong Thought as a system of the foundational pillars of people's war, New Democracy, and Sinified Marxism-Leninism; and (3) the conditions in target countries such as shared semicolonial, semifeudal status and the intended revolutionary intellectual audience of exported Maoism. All three ultimately tell the story of



FIGURE 2.1. “The Boundless Radiance of Mao Zedong Thought Shines throughout the Whole World” (*guangyan wujide Mao Zedong sixiang zhao quanshijie*). Editorial unit of Maps of War Dispatches (*Ditu zhanbao*), Workers’ Representative Assembly of China, Cartographic Publishing House Revolutionary Committee. Issue 9, November 1967.

reception, the third stage of the expanded traveling theory model, and provide the *mise en scène* for the subset problem of adaptation.

Transmission fits neatly as the second stage of the expanded traveling theory model because several historical circumstances facilitated Maoism's emergence in Cambodia. Moscow's designs to assert Soviet authority over the interpretation of Marxist organization and ideology across the globe, including its long prevailing "two camps" strategy, had influenced the CCP's approach during the PRC's early years (1949–1953).⁴ By the Sino-Soviet Split, however, the CCP leadership broke from Moscow by not pressuring its ideology's reception and adaptation in foreign countries. The Soviet brand of salvation's failure to ameliorate conditions in the developing world, and China's lower stage of development, culminated in the emergence of the PRC in the early 1960s as leader of a Third World revolution. As such, Maoism (as I refer to it outside of a Chinese context) arose as the shining beacon of Third World revolution.

Although Beijing pursued an ideologically charged foreign policy during the Cultural Revolution, the goal was never to direct foreign revolutions.⁵ Similar to the concentric circles of traditional Chinese "land under heaven/the world/China" (*tianxia*), in which the emperor's virtuousness/morality (*de*) civilizes outside peoples into adopting Chinese ways, the "center of world revolution" never meant the "center from which orders are issued."⁶ For China, the "actual lighting of the prairie fire" or foreign revolutions was ultimately "left to the local single sparks themselves."⁷ The exchange was dialectical, as radicals outside China had considerable agency in their reception and adaptation of Maoism. In engaging with Maoism seriously, they interpreted and reinterpreted, shaped and reshaped it in accordance with local requirements.

Maoism and the Chinese revolution were indeed powerful sources of inspiration and ideological leadership to the world's marginalized peoples that, if applied and adapted concretely, could propel a revolutionary movement from dormancy to state power. Mao held that the "correct" ideology, applied globally, was the determining factor in revolutionary success.⁸ In this sense, Maoism as an ideological system within which adaptation to local conditions was built in serves as a liberation-theology-type response to developing world realities and cycles of dependency.⁹

Red Evangelism: Exporting China's Revolution

The notion of Mao Zedong Thought as a weapon became a popular propaganda slogan during the Cultural Revolution. In his 1965 "Long Live the

Victory of People's War!" pamphlet, Lin Biao claimed that a "spiritual atom bomb," not a physical one, had the most power.¹⁰ Less than a year later, he referenced the same metaphor again in reference to Friedrich Engels's argument that all technologies "are extensions of this hand-brain dyad, designed to carry out human purposes."¹¹ Lin's point in both instances was that if the masses received and understood Maoism, it could provide them "infinite power."

Equally important is how the CCP "weaponized" Maoism into an accessible form to export it globally. Whereas the Communist Party of the Soviet Union exported the AK-47 to support revolutionary struggles militarily, the CCP transmitted Maoism to fight imperialism ideologically.¹² In the CCP Party Center's view, peoples of all countries could form the broadest possible front to smash US imperialism if they wielded the "spiritual atom bomb" of Maoism in unison.¹³ Maoism in its early exported form was therefore a "fixed, detailed doctrine" that whittled down the Chinese revolution's reasons for its triumph into a "tripod" founded on Mao's Sinification of Marxism-Leninism. Its three "legs" were the Leninist Party, a guerrilla army established along the lines of the CCP-led People's Liberation Army (PLA), and a correct policy regarding the united front.¹⁴

The CCP battle plan for exporting Maoism began with its de-Stalinization of its foreign policy at the twenty-nine-nation April 1955 Afro-Asian conference in Bandung, Indonesia. As CCP foreign policy shifted to a more radical tenor, its recruits and generals were revolutionaries such as Pol Pot, who visited Beijing and met with prominent CCP officials. The CCP's battle manual was the portable booklet *Quotations from Chairman Mao* (Little Red Book). As a guide, this chapter categorizes the CCP's three major efforts of Third World outreach, each of which corresponded to foreign policy shifts in Beijing, as the following: (1) the 1955 "Spirit of Bandung," directed by the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (official PRC foreign policy guidelines until 1965), which represented the PRC's early Third World outreach; (2) the revolutionary approach of welcoming foreign revolutionaries and world leaders on official state visits; and (3) the radical-ideological approach of the Cultural Revolution (1966–1975), whereby CCP agencies translated and disseminated *Quotations of Chairman Mao* globally (a hallmark of China's transmission of Maoism).

The Bandung Spirit: The 1955 Afro-Asian Conference

"The content of imperialist politics is 'world domination' and the continuation of these politics is imperialist war," said Lenin.¹⁵ Mao was certain of the

PRC's ideology and international role by the 1949 foundation, but he did not discuss foreign outreach to combat imperialism during the Yan'an years. Socialist development was still in its infancy in China. Aside from Liu Shaoqi's declaration that year of "the universal value of Chinese revolutionary experience and its application to peoples from other colonies and semi-colonies," China's allegiance remained strictly to the Soviet Union in foreign policy matters.¹⁶ The PRC delegation's approach at the 1954 Geneva conference, for instance, was to champion Stalin's policy of "peaceful coexistence" by supporting the Vietnamese nationalist coalition, the Viet Minh. Beijing's endorsement showed such an allegiance but revealed CCP desires for international prestige.¹⁷

Scholars and period newspapers characterized China's first significant foreign policy era (1953–1957) as the "Spirit of Bandung."¹⁸ After an inwardly focused first stage (1949–1952) of uniting China and consolidating rule (chapter 1), and with the outbreak of the Korean War and India's Jawaharlal Nehru government expressing a growing interest in some, but not all, Sino-Soviet ideas, Beijing sought to forge new global ties. Fellow Communist countries and nationalist revolutionaries throughout Asia presented CCP foreign policymakers with rich opportunities. In a secret agreement between Stalin and Liu Shaoqi on the "'division of labor' for waging world revolution," both decided that Moscow would guide the global proletarian revolution, whereas Beijing would promote the "Eastern revolution."¹⁹

In the PRC's first decade, the CCP launched a global outreach campaign hinged on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, nonaggression, noninterference, mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence). China's involvement in the Korean War and extensive land reform programs prompted leaders to foster alliances to deflect attention from Beijing as a catalyst for international tensions. The CCP formalized the Five Principles as the PRC's official foreign policy in 1954 and declared in a 1956 statement that all socialist countries are "independent, sovereign states . . . united to the common ideal of socialism and the spirit of proletarian internationalism . . . established on the basis of these five principles."²⁰ CCP officials recognized developing world nations as socialist and non-aligned, and pledged that Beijing would support, but never interfere with, their domestic affairs.²¹ But in 1955, Chinese policymakers' designs shifted gradually to a de-Stalinized foreign policy of extending rhetorical and material support for nations that were socialist, yet maintained formal relations with the United States or the de-Stalinizing Soviet Union.

PRC officials put the Five Principles into practice in April 1955 at the twenty-nine-nation Afro-Asian conference in Bandung, Indonesia, where Prime

Minister Zhou Enlai was sent to increase China's stature and guide the Afro-Asian movements toward socialism. His personal diplomacy as a charismatic representative of Maoist China was indicative of Beijing's new foreign policy. It also helped reform China's image into one of peaceful, unconditional support for nonaligned nations regardless of political orientation.²² Zhou met with representatives of the PRC's then principal enemy, the United States, to resolve tensions in Asia and brokered treaties with the formerly thinly veiled white man's club in Asia, the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization, by reaching out to Pakistan, the Philippines, and Thailand. He also guaranteed Indonesian overseas Chinese the freedom to choose Indonesian citizenship over their Chinese one. This showed that Beijing was not trying to rope in the Chinese Diaspora.²³

Most important for our purposes, Zhou's personal diplomacy revitalized Sino-Cambodian relations after several decades during which Cambodia was peripheral to Chinese interests.²⁴ Cambodian head of state Norodom Sihanouk (r. 1941–1955, then prime minister of Cambodia, 1955–1970), a Buddhist socialist advocate for neutrality, recognized that Chinese support could forestall Vietnamese and Thai adventurism.²⁵ His staunch neutrality and dependence on foreign aid during the 1950s led him on a path to prevent the rise of radicalism.²⁶ It also led him to permit Vietnamese and Chinese forces to use Eastern Cambodia and present-day Sihanoukville for the Ho Chi Minh Trail during the Second Indochina conflict, as safeguarding Cambodian sovereignty was his priority at Bandung.

Zhou's support for Sihanouk's neutrality was a significant change of course.²⁷ Sihanouk described his friendship with Zhou as brought about by "destiny," and his official biographer recalled that amicable relations between China and Cambodia were an extension of this personal friendship. Sihanouk established formal Cambodia-China relations and visited Beijing for the first of many visits in 1956.²⁸ He sent his sons Norodom Naradipo, Norodom Yuva-neath, and Norodom Khemanourak to study in Beijing under Zhou's personal supervision. By 1960 Sihanouk had cultivated a close friendship with Mao as well and lauded Maoist China for its land grants to poor farmers, free medical care and education, and protection of the people's rights.²⁹

Sihanouk was also "pitched" the Five Principles in meetings with Zhou, Prime Minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru, and Prime Minister of Burma U Nu at Bandung and pledged his allegiance to them in the interest of safeguarding Cambodian neutrality.³⁰ In February 1956 Sihanouk met with Zhou in Beijing as a response to decisions by the United States, Thailand, and South Vietnam to impose an economic blockade on Cambodia for its Beijing ties. Both men pledged "commitment unto death to the Five Principles," ratified the Sino-

Cambodian Declaration of Unity and Friendship, and finalized economic assistance and trade deals.³¹ Another agreement followed on 19 December 1960 in Beijing, the Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Non-interference, which declared that China “did not intend to intervene in Cambodian internal affairs.”³² Then, in a move that enunciated the growing Sino-Cambodian friendship, Sihanouk mortgaged the United States’ vote of confidence in an official endorsement of the PRC to occupy China’s seat in the UN.³³ Subsequent economic deals ensured Sihanouk that his country would receive aid from China (over US\$48 million between 1956 and 1963) that rivaled the US aid pledge of 800 million riels (roughly US\$20 million in 1963). He regarded Chinese assistance as “the most precious aid to the Khmer nation” and “an answer to Cambodia’s vital needs.”³⁴ In April 1964 China and Cambodia signed the first official aid agreement between China and a non-Communist nation that secured Chinese-made materials for Cambodia for years thereafter.³⁵

PRC leaders matched economic pledges with rhetorical support that stressed that the China-Cambodia friendship was “eternal” and “like that of a family.”³⁶ Though Mao attempted to sell Sihanouk on Communism—that he “deserve[d] to be a Communist”—the Cambodian leader’s rebuffs did not dissuade Mao from “effusively and fully support[ing]” him.³⁷ Numerous issues of *Mianhua ribao* echoed the CCP’s support for neutral Cambodia. Pledges of friendship manifested in the realm of cultural diplomacy as well. Friendship associations between China and non-Communist countries had become more common during this era, with people in such countries even “sponsoring friendship organizations in their home countries with China.”³⁸ In the early 1960s, warm China-Cambodia relations underpinned the Khmer-Chinese Friendship Association’s foundation in 1961, then its official formation in September 1964 with Sihanouk as its president and Hu Nim and Pol Pot’s future secretary, Phouk Chhay, as ranking members.³⁹ The Chinese-language Phnom Penh-based newspaper *Mianhua ribao* also performed well among overseas Chinese communities in Cambodia at this time.⁴⁰ As many originated from Chaozhou, Beijing sent its deputy mayor, Wang Kunlun, to lead the Guangdong Chaozhou Opera Troupe to perform the drama *Meeting among the Reeds* (*Lu Lin Hui*) in Phnom Penh in the winter of 1960, after which Wang published a lengthy poem in *Mianhua ribao*. His “literary style,” *Mianhua ribao* editor Vita Chieu notes, “gave a face to *Mianhua ribao* and won over many new readers.”⁴¹

In all, the PRC’s “Bandung Spirit” entailed a commitment to noninterference and situated the country as a diplomatic force. The Afro-Asian Conference was a success for Chinese diplomacy, after which China broke out of the US-imposed containment and increased its international prestige through new

alliances. Maoist China's de-Stalinized foreign policy paved the way for an ameliorated international stature within the nonaligned movement and facilitated its emergence as the preeminent source for Communist movements by the Sino-Soviet Split. Several Third World nationalist and Communist leaders soon turned not to Soviet-style Marxism-Leninism but to China for diplomatic and material support.

The CCP welcomed this new audience of socialists and revolutionaries with pledges of significant aid and hosted some on official visits to Beijing. In the former states of French Indochina, the CCP granted over 316 million yuan in aid to the Cambodian Communists between 1970 and 1974 and over 5 billion yuan to the North Vietnamese.⁴² Such pledges of aid, of course, were customary during the CCP's radical foreign policy and were in line with its earlier devotion to promoting "Eastern revolution." It was during this foreign policy era that Pol Pot, the future CPK leader, visited China with the hope of receiving Chinese support for a Cambodian Communist movement. After Moscow's allies, and his direct superiors, in Hanoi rejected his plans offhand, he moved to the Chinese capital to meet with CCP figures who would change his outlook considerably.

A Maoist Awakening: Pol Pot Visits Beijing, 1965–1966

Another aspect of the export of Maoism was hosting revolutionaries to strengthen ties between the CCP and Communist movements worldwide. The CCP leadership viewed such visits as important domestically and internationally, as "hosting duties underscore[d] at home the triumph of the revolution."⁴³ One particularly important visit was Pol Pot's 1965–1966 trip to Beijing as a Vietnamese ally.⁴⁴ Not unlike Taiping Rebellion leader Hong Xiuquan's "Taiping vision" after reading (and initially dismissing) Liang A-fa's *Good Words to Admonish the Age* (*Quanshi liangyan*), Pol Pot's visit gave him the "dream" in which Mao's ideas that he read about in Paris (chapter 3) became important to him. Thereafter until DK's end in 1979, Pol Pot regarded China and Mao as brilliant beacons of world revolution. This section examines the circumstances that led to Pol Pot's Beijing visit. It also explores how his experiences there, when China was on the brink of the Cultural Revolution, initiated his interest in the faith Maoism that shaped his line of attack for the Cambodian Communist movement.

Mao's ideas of greater unity through global realignment were presented to various Third World national leaders through visits by nonaligned heads of state and by leaders of parties that opposed them. Such visits were seldom a first resort; rather, China was often a secondary option, as in the case of Pol

Pot. The 11 November 1945 dissolution of the Indochinese Communist Party (ICP) led to the formation of separate national Communist Parties in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. All were effectively headquartered in Hanoi, where from 1954 onward leaders of the Worker's Party of Vietnam (WPV) prioritized the anti-imperial resistance against the United States. Active in rural Cambodia in the early 1950s, the Cambodian Communists had followed Hanoi's directives to withhold their revolution against Sihanouk, whose agreement with Vietnam permitted troops to move through Cambodian lands into South Vietnam. In the mid-1960s, though, Communist leaders grew frustrated with waiting and looked to China as a beacon of light to guide the movement out of the countryside and into the capital. Any tracing of the evolution on Pol Pot's thinking and revolutionary imaginings thus begins with forces that emanated from Beijing in the 1960s.

Antecedents

The PRC's second period of foreign policy (1958–1965) marked a radical shift in relations with the Third World that paved the way for Pol Pot's interest in visiting China. On the domestic front, the Great Leap Forward and People's Communes—both hallmarks of the “Chinese Road to Socialism”—signaled the CCP's departure from the Soviet model.⁴⁵ PRC foreign policy reflected this desire to break out on its own. The boldness that characterized this period translated into a vigorous foreign policy that differed from, and was inimical to, that of the Soviet Union after the Sino-Soviet dispute. After Stalin's death in 1953, Nikita Khrushchev initiated an era of de-Stalinization and peaceful coexistence with the capitalist powers. By the late 1950s, Mao and the CCP began to view Soviet foreign policy as revisionist.⁴⁶

Sino-Soviet tensions escalated in the 1960s. At the 16 July 1960 Bucharest conference, Soviet representatives told Beijing that the country's 1,400 advisers and experts in China were to leave owing to “poor treatment” by Chinese handlers.⁴⁷ The CCP's “Sino-Soviet Great Polemics” (or, the four major polemics against revisionism) only fueled such tensions. The Editorial Department of *Red Flag* (*Hongqi*, formerly *Red Flag Weekly*; *Hongqi zhoubao*) released one of them, “Long Live Leninism!,” on 22 April 1960 to mark the ninetieth anniversary of Lenin's birth. It charged that differences between the two Communist powers were, in fact, ideological in nature.⁴⁸ The Sino-Soviet dispute continued with Mao's polemic in which he charged that Khrushchev's Communism was “phony” and “revisionist.”⁴⁹ By September 1963, Mao proclaimed that China now recognized the Soviet Union as the chief threat to international stability and world peace. No longer allied to Moscow, the CCP shifted its

vocabulary in referring to recently established foreign leftist parties that had emerged since the split as either Marxist-Leninist or New Parties (*Ma-Lie dang/xindang*) for those with a Maoist orientation. Those that owed their allegiance to Moscow, though, were dubbed Parties of a Revisionist or Old (*xiuzheng dang/jiudang*) type.⁵⁰

The ongoing first wave of decolonization also set the stage of Pol Pot's visit to China. The CCP's break with the Soviets officially ended the "Spirit of Bandung," as peaceful coexistence had failed to deal a deathblow to US imperialism in Asia. As the "First World" of US capitalism and the Soviet-led "Second World" of socialism fought for world hegemony, the "Third World" had served as the "battleground" and its citizens the "cannon fodder." The victors either split the spoils of war or dispossessed themselves of the ruin in their wake.⁵¹ US military might increased in East Asia, but European colonial powers could no longer maintain their iron grip on their holdings after World War II. The CCP thus positioned China as the leader of an independent "third line" of struggles in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.⁵² Such a move meant that the Chinese Communists had to do more than merely support their newfound friends against the superpowers; they had to inspire them with the Chinese revolutionary success as a model.

From Vietnamese to Chinese Guidance

Before China inspired Pol Pot, changes in the Indochinese peninsula positioned it as an ideological wellspring. The 1945 August Revolution that followed Japan's breaking of its surrender agreement with Allies (*coup de force*) led to the reemergence of Indochinese patriotism and strong senses of social concern among Southeast Asian urbanites.⁵³ Upon seizing power in Hanoi, the WPV maintained the ICP's 1934 mandate of an Indochinese movement under Vietnamese direction with no room for an independent Cambodian movement. WPV leader Ho Chi Minh iterated that independent Communist Parties for Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos "does not prejudice the revolutionary movement in Indochina. . . . The Vietnamese Party reserves the right to supervise the activities of its brother Parties in Cambodia and Laos."⁵⁴ The WPV decision awoke familiar demons for the Cambodian Communists (Khmer Revolutionary People's Party, KPRP; predecessor to the Worker's Party of Kampuchea, WPK), who resented this subordinate designation. Many recalled vividly the French favoritism of the Vietnamese in civil service positions in Cambodia, a period during which Khmers felt "twice colonized."⁵⁵

The issue of Vietnamese leadership over the larger struggles throughout Indochina arose again at the 1954 Geneva Conference after the climactic Battle

of Dien Bien Phu during the First Indochina War (1946–1954). WPV representatives Pham Van Dong and Ho Chi Minh did their best to intensify Cambodian revolutionaries' collective fears that their neighbors had their own designs for Khmer lands. The WPV delegation announced its refusal to withdraw its forces from Laos and Cambodia. Pham and Ho insisted that the Indochinese Democratic Front (Viet Minh), not the Royal Governments of Cambodia and Laos, represented the two countries.⁵⁶ They cited the WPV program, which declared that the Vietnamese people "must unite closely with the peoples of Laos and Kampuchea . . . in the common struggle against imperialism [to] liberate Indochina. . . . The Vietnamese are prepared to have long-term cooperation with Lao and Kampuchean peoples and to strive for the realization of true unity of the three peoples."⁵⁷ Their notion of an independent Cambodia and Laos was therefore only true in theory; in practice, the WPV would preside over an Indochina Federation from the Vietnamese capital in Hanoi.⁵⁸

The PRC delegation, led by Zhou Enlai, urged the Vietnamese to recognize Sihanouk's Royal Government of Cambodia along the lines of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. The justification was that Sihanouk would not abrogate Cambodia's sovereignty and permit the establishment of US military bases along China's southern flank.⁵⁹ Zhou stressed to Sihanouk's Cambodian delegation, the importance of Cambodia as a bulwark against an Indochina Federation and reassured him that China had his back.⁶⁰ Zhou's personal diplomacy was successful, as Ho and Pham agreed to withdraw Vietnamese forces from Cambodia.⁶¹

The agreements at Geneva, however, did nothing to alleviate Cambodian Communists' concerns about the future of an autonomous movement. As Pol Pot later recalled, the "authentic revolutionary struggle of our people . . . to wrest independence from the French imperialists . . . vanished into thin air with the 1954 Geneva Accords."⁶² Vietnamese recognition of the anti-Communist Sihanouk as Cambodia's leader and the subsequent December 1958 arrangement that permitted Vietnamese Communist forces access to Cambodian territories for the "Ho Chi Minh Trail" all but eliminated the fledgling now-named Worker's Party of Kampuchea's opportunity to radicalize and mobilize its small yet impassioned membership against him.⁶³

The WPV reiterated its pro-Sihanouk line in a late 1964–early 1965 meeting between WPK delegation leader Pol Pot and WPV general secretary Le Duan in Hanoi. The WPK's Central Committee sent Pol Pot, who was schooled in organizational tactics of the Stalinist French Communist Party (PCF). His mission was to establish interparty relations and to agree on guidelines for the Cambodian party's strategy during the Second Indochina War.⁶⁴ Pol Pot and

fellow Communist and ex-KPRP Central Committee member, Keo Meas (1926–1976), set off for Hanoi via the Ho Chi Minh Trail in early April 1965 and arrived in mid-June, whereupon they met “several times” with Ho Chi Minh and Le Duan. During this time, Pol Pot “spent a lot of time studying ICP historical documents” and, according to CCP intelligence officer deployed in Cambodia, Vita Chieu, discovered “many views that were not conducive to the Cambodian Revolution.”⁶⁵ As part of his mission he presented his program of self-reliance and independence and requested arms to use against Sihanouk.

In response, Le displayed “an almost visceral insensitivity to Cambodian concerns” in his dismissal of it, and stressed again that the Cambodian struggle was subordinate to the Indochina-wide struggle against imperialism.⁶⁶ The anti-imperialist war, Le reminded Pol Pot, had to end before the WPK could revolt. He then decried the Cambodian program for its “nationalist focus” that “ran counter to Vietnamese interests.” Le Duan concluded that Pol Pot’s program was a prime example of “insubstantial, faulty Marxism” and was therefore “irrelevant.”⁶⁷ The WPV decision convinced Pol Pot to contact the Chinese through “secret organizations of overseas Chinese in Vietnam (north and south) . . . and with the Chinese embassy in Hanoi” and arrange a stay in Beijing.⁶⁸

He embarked on a long trek to the Chinese capital to meet with what he hoped would be Communist leaders who were sympathetic to his cause. Pol Pot arrived in Beijing and stayed at the Asian, African, and Latin America Training Centre (Ya-Fei-La peixun zhongxin) near the Summer Palace. The precise dates and length of his 1965–1966 visit are unknown, though his meeting with CCP officials may have taken place from 21 November 1965 to 11 January 1966.⁶⁹ Because the trip was a secret, sources that confirm specifics are scarce to none.⁷⁰ None of the official chronological biographies (*nianpu*) of Chinese officials with whom Pol Pot met mentions the visit. Official Chinese sources did not begin to identify the CPK until 1975, and even then, the focus was on the Khmer Republic (1970–1975). One source, CCP intelligence officer Vita Chieu, dates Pol Pot’s arrival to late December 1965 in Beijing, where Deng Xiaoping received him. Chieu also claims that Pol Pot met with First Secretary of the CCP Beijing Committee Peng Zhen and ranking CCP figures Liu Shaoyi, Chen Boda, and Zhang Chunqiao.⁷¹

In accordance with the CCP’s adherence to the Five Principles and the PRC’s existing treaty with Sihanouk, the official line was that Pol Pot ought to support Sihanouk, an important strategic ally for China. CCP outlets avoided publicizing the visit, and the officials who met with him could not endorse the Cambodian Communist movement outright.⁷² Regardless of the shroud of secrecy surrounding the trip, the CCP did not view the meeting as offside so

long as any encouragement that Chinese representatives voiced for Pol Pot was sub rosa (official CCP assistance began in August 1970).⁷³ The Cambodian Communists still responded to Hanoi, and their limited base areas, small membership, and inability to reciprocate any aid to China meant that CCP offers of material support did not violate existing deals.

Pol Pot's visit coincided with events in the PRC that left a lasting imprint on him. He experienced the rising tide of Maoist revival that accompanied the SEM. Also, the champion of faith Maoist zealotry, Lin Biao, had released his pamphlet "Long Live the Victory of People's War!" only months before Pol Pot's arrival. While Vietnam fought its war against American imperialism, Lin's clarion call for the universal applicability of Mao's military strategy cast light on a proven method to defeat any adversaries to socialism. His emphasis on revolutionary self-reliance was music to Pol Pot's ears. He also identified with Mao's theory of permanent revolution, the role of subjective forces in waging struggle, and the inclusion of peasants in the revolutionary vanguard under the directorship of the proletariat.⁷⁴

Importantly, Mao's heir apparent Lin Biao applied people's war macrocosmically to the entire world. All the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America would "encircle the cities"—the first and second worlds—much as the Chinese Communists had done in 1949.⁷⁵ This application recognized smaller, underdeveloped countries like Cambodia as valuable actors in a global struggle against superpower domination. Cambodia had incredible potential if its movement could get off the ground. Pol Pot thus came to regard Mao's ideas in the same way that they were generally referred to in China: as a "magic weapon" (*da fabao*) sent from heaven to aid Cambodia's struggle.

The CCP response to Pol Pot's arrival was, allegedly, that they welcomed him with a warm reception (see figure 2.2).⁷⁶ Although he "did not meet with Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai," Chen Boda and Zhang Chunqiao "expressed their willingness to provide material assistance" to his cause. Upon his departure from China, Pol Pot had "received great encouragement and wholeheartedly supported the CCP line."⁷⁷ A Vietnamese source corroborates this claim: "The Cambodian Party, like any other Party, must deal with American imperialism immediately [and] when they widen the war in Indochina. . . . Every Party, including the Cambodian Party, has the task of fighting American imperialism [to] preserve peace and neutrality. . . . And if one desires to oppose the plots of American imperialists, including their plot to escalate [the war], then one must take hold of the peasantry."⁷⁸ An interview with Pol Pot in 1977 elaborates on this recollection of Chinese support, as the CPK leader noted: "Our Chinese friends whole-heartedly supported our political line, for they were then battling revisionism at a time when classes were struggling with each other at the



FIGURE 2.2. Pol Pot (*center right*) walks with Chinese official Wang Dongxing (*center left*) during a Chinese delegation visit to Democratic Kampuchea, 5 November 1978. Pol Pot visited China secretly in late 1965–early 1966, in 1975, and twice in 1977. Photograph courtesy of the Documentation Center of Cambodia, Phnom Penh.

international level. . . . It was only when we [the Khmer Communists] went abroad that we realized that our movement was quite correct and that our political line was also fundamentally correct.”⁷⁹ Mao corroborated this account in a 21 June 1975 meeting with Pol Pot in Beijing: “China has no qualification to criticize you, but have to applaud you. You are essentially correct.”⁸⁰

CCP approval of Pol Pot’s program reinvigorated his sense of revolutionary worth. No longer interested in adherence to Vietnamese prioritizations of its own war against the United States, Pol Pot pinned his star to Maoism. He returned to Cambodia in 1966 with “a few pieces of French translations of *Selected Works of Mao*” with the intent to plot his movement against Siha-nouk’s government.⁸¹ In September, his faith Maoist influence began to take shape in the form of some important changes that he put into effect within the WPK. He officially changed the WPK’s name to the Chinese-influenced Communist Party of Kampuchea, a name that remained in effect until the party’s dissolution in 1981.⁸² His party also established two new journals that reflected his adherence to faith Maoism: (1) *Red Flag* (*Dañ’kraham*), a Cambodian equivalent of the Chinese journal of the same name (*Hongqi*), and (2) *Red Light* (*Rasmīkraham*, after *Hongguang*), from a Chinese student newspaper that emerged in France in the 1920s.⁸³

Perhaps the best indicator of this faith Maoist shift was a letter penned by Pol Pot (translated from French into Chinese by an interpreter, as Sihanouk had used in meetings with Mao) that he sent to Beijing in 1967:

Comrades, we are extremely pleased to report that in terms of ideological outlook, as well as our revolutionary line, that we are preparing the implementation of a people's war which has been moved towards an unstoppable point. Simultaneously, in terms of organization, there are also favorable circumstances, as well as for the execution of working affairs. Thus, we dare to affirm that: although there are obstacles ahead, we will still continue to put into effect the revolutionary work according to the line of the people's war which Chairman Mao Zedong has pointed out in terms of its independence, sovereignty, and self-reliance.⁸⁴

Here, Pol Pot identifies several Maoist precepts that were central to the Cambodian revolution, many of which he certainly read about in the 1951 French-language *Editions sociales* version of Mao's "On New Democracy" (*La nouvelle Démocratie*) while a student in Paris.⁸⁵ Aside from the fact that he could not read works originally in Chinese, he recalled in a 1984 *Cai Ximei* interview that when he read "Chairman Mao's books, [he] felt that they were easy to understand."⁸⁶

Pol Pot's experiences in Beijing, most of all, showed him firsthand the rewards of such theories if followed. He valued Mao Zedong Thought above all else. To him, it was "the most precious aid," for "Comrade President Mao never ceased his support [of] our efforts." He credited Mao and the CCP for their "heroic and unswerving commitment to the international Communist movement."⁸⁷ The CPK equipped itself with Maoism as its "magic weapon," and with China's formal backing in 1970 it grew to become the preeminent revolutionary force in Cambodia.

The 1965–1966 visit was an intellectual awakening for Pol Pot. Lin Biao's faith Maoism was now the brilliant beacon to guide the Cambodian movement. Initially a reaction to Vietnamese orders for Pol Pot to avoid conflict with Sihanouk, the trip convinced Pol Pot that China was the leading force in the Third World struggle. In a 1977 issue of *People's Daily* (*Renmin ribao*), the resonating force of Pol Pot's visit was clear: "We have studied the experience of world revolution, especially the works of *Comrade Mao Zedong* and the *experience of the Chinese revolution* of the period that has an important impact for us. After assessing the specific experience of Kampuchea and studying a number of instances of world revolution, and particularly under the guidance of the works of Comrade Mao Zedong, we have found an appropriate line with China's specific conditions and social situation for the realities of Kampuchea . . . and this line was debated and approved by the first congress, held at

Phnom Penh on September 30, 1960.”⁸⁸ Pol Pot acknowledges that he and his comrades had read Mao’s works before the 1960 founding of the WPK, though the actual date of its first congress was 1951 when it was the KPRP. He also rewrites the past to serve his present; his statement about 1960 is as much about legitimizing the CPK’s political line to secure Chinese support as it is faithfully recalling history.

These two features of Pol Pot’s thinking—applying a foreign theory and experience to concrete realities and revising the past to augment the leader’s personal role in party history—mirror similar trends in Mao’s life in the years preceding and during Yan’an Rectification. Not unlike Mao before him, Pol Pot positioned himself as the visionary “man of prowess” whose personal role became inextricably enmeshed in party history.

A Revolutionary Bible: Quotations from Chairman Mao and Cambodian Radicalism

Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong evolved beyond its diminutive form to become a medium through which the Chinese revolution spread outside China. By the mid-1960s, CCP leaders aimed to accelerate Third World struggle against imperialism through the systematic translation (into more than sixty languages) and distribution of Mao’s most resonant quotes. Mao was eager to present the PRC as “an example with applications in other parts of the world,” and the mass translation of Maoist texts increased exponentially during the Cultural Revolution.⁸⁹ Despite the triumph of practical matters in PRC foreign policy in the 1970s, a period during which the CCP established formal relations with the long-hated United States, the decline of Mao-centric radicalism did not curb Mao’s appeal abroad. As its popularity skyrocketed, *Quotations*’ continued circulation made Maoism accessible to a new generation of radicals and breathed life into Maoism after Mao’s death in 1976.

The CCP tasked the Foreign Languages Press (FLP) with translating foreign works into Chinese and vice versa, and it assigned the International Bookstore (IB), a constituent part of the Foreign Affairs Committee (*Waishi Weiyuanhui*, FAC), with global distribution. Over the course of the Cultural Revolution, the FLP translated *Quotations* into over a dozen languages. The IB then shipped over one billion inexpensively made foreign-language copies of *Quotations* and Mao’s writings between 1966 and 1971 to over a hundred countries for either free distribution or sale at virtually no cost.⁹⁰ *Quotations* soon became a comprehensive political guide in China.⁹¹ By the Cultural Revolution’s onset, the IB joined the FLP to “accelerate” the world revolution by

providing an “invaluable contribution to socialist internationalism and to the development of global revolution” in the form of more Mao works and related propaganda, most notably *Quotations*.⁹²

Several factors explain this phenomenon. The Central Propaganda Department's (*zhongxuanbu*) development of Bolshevik-style agitprop coincided with CCP claims to represent the absolute truth of a scientific world. The timing and method by which *Quotations* was disseminated widely, first domestically and then globally, established a receptive audience of would-be acolytes. *Quotations*' ingenious physical format as a pocketbook, and the Cultural Revolution's political environment, also allowed the messianic message of Mao's words to reach a worldwide audience before the abject chaos of those years was widely publicized.⁹³

The CCP Party Center regarded *Quotations* as reading material to inspire revolutionary movements in the Chinese mold. The FLP and IB relied principally on international trade connections to overcome existing political and spatial obstacles. The CCP's hastening of world revolution engendered the worldwide spread of Maoism in a portable format to inspire revolutionaries everywhere and promote China's revolutionary successes. Examples of its frequency in other countries ranged from the benign to a direct party effort to inspire revolution. *Peking Information* (*Pékin Information*) states that FLP translated volumes 1 and 4 of *Selected Works of Chairman Mao* (French: *Oeuvres choisies*) into several languages and exported them in 1966.⁹⁴ Pol Pot lauded *Selected Works* by name in a 1977 interview: “In this excellent situation, the publication of the fifth volume of *Selected Works of Chairman Mao* constitutes a political scope of events both for China and for world's revolutionary peoples.”⁹⁵

Both institutions became major players in China's foreign affairs throughout the world, including Cambodia, by the latter part of the 1950s. One example of *Quotations* spurring interest in Maoism was in Phnom Penh. By 1965, French copies (no Khmer-language *Quotations* existed at that time) “abounded among high school students and younger Buddhist monks,” whereas local Chinese and CCP-dispatched technical advisers and aid experts waved “freely available” ones.⁹⁶ On the ubiquity of translated Mao texts in Phnom Penh, one-time CPK intellectual Suong Sikœun (1937–present) reflected fondly: “I threw myself into reading Mao Zedong's works, the only Marxist books available in Phnom Penh. . . . We built a small library where we found, among others, ‘On New Democracy,’ ‘On Contradiction,’ ‘On Practice,’ ‘On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People.’ Also included were President Liu Shaoqi's ‘How to Be a Good Communist,’ and Lenin's ‘Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism,’ ‘One Step Forward, Two Steps Back,’ ‘The April Theses,’ and ‘What Is to Be Done?’”⁹⁷ The FLP's mass translation and

IB's circulation of radical texts from China irked Cambodia's politically neutral head of state Norodom Sihanouk. He was especially shocked to find out that the book was popular in Chinese schools and monasteries alike, and decried "subversive activities" within the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Phnom Penh-financed Khmer-Chinese Friendship Association (AAKC) and General Association of Khmer Students (AGEK).⁹⁸

Local Chinese (7.5% of the population at that time), who formed "an intrinsic and important part of the Cambodian plural society," also spurred Maoist activity.⁹⁹ They held demonstrations outside the Soviet embassy and elsewhere, and Cambodian youths and soldiers alike donned Mao badges and "emulate[ed] the Red Guards' by posting large wall posters that criticized the Sihanouk government." One local Chinese teacher in Phnom Penh, Huy Huynh, taught Mao Zedong Thought in high school, and others followed suit, which prompted the government to threaten the closure of Chinese community-run schools.¹⁰⁰

Chinese-language print media also encapsulated the Cultural Revolution fervor that fueled Phnom Penh's radical urban culture. Five Chinese-language newspapers (*Mianhua Ribao* among them) published Cultural Revolution propaganda frequently and balanced pro-CCP with pro-Sihanouk articles. FLP personnel worked especially closely with *Mianhua ribao*. Some issues were more overt in their enthusiasm. One article encouraged Cambodian *huaqiao* readers to "follow the achievements of Comrade Lei Feng" (xuexi Lei Feng tongzhi qi zhixie) in line with the parallel campaign in China that followed the model citizen's premature death in 1962.¹⁰¹ Local Chinese support for the fledgling Cambodian Communist movement followed, and as they were already "well organized and had established ties to Beijing," Cambodian *huaqiao* served as an important link between China and the emergent CPK.¹⁰² As Vita Chieu recalled, he met regularly with CPK figure Keo Meas, by then the head of a Pracheachon (People's Group) newspaper. Sihanouk shuttered popular leftist and pro-CCP Chinese-language newspapers, including *Mianhua ribao*, as a response to the popularity of such newspapers.¹⁰³

China-curious student groups marked by a keen interest in the Chinese revolutionary experience and radical social transformation were equally instrumental in facilitating China's popularity in Cambodia. The two main Cambodian China-curious associations were AGEK and the Embassy-financed AAKC (established in 1961, but formally in 1964).¹⁰⁴ AGEK and AAKC ranking members Hu Nim and Phouk Chhay visited Beijing as heads of a youth delegation, and at the Beijing-based China-Cambodia Friendship Association's (AACC) urging, no less.¹⁰⁵

What did both men witness on such visits to China? Phouk Chhay's 1977 "confession" notes that he returned to Phnom Penh enthused by what he witnessed in Beijing: "At this time [1965–1966] my revolutionary vision was not very clear, but when I witnessed the Chinese implement the Cultural Revolution I began to believe and love their way of doing things and, at the same time, I developed a stance against Soviet Communism."¹⁰⁶ On Hu Nim's first trip to China in 1963–1964 as a journalist for the Sihanoukist daily *The Nationalist* (*Anakjātiniyam*), the China-Cambodia Friendship Association urged him to establish the AAKC in Phnom Penh. He visited in 1965 "for fifteen days," and his "leftist activities" won him the favor of Zhou Enlai and Liu Shaoqi.¹⁰⁷ He wrote favorably of China in his 1965 dissertation and intimated that the Chinese "felt secure with my activities."¹⁰⁸ Chinese officials favored him to the point that AACC director Ding Xilin flew from Beijing to attend the AAKC's inaugural ceremony in Phnom Penh.¹⁰⁹

If many local Chinese communities were catalysts for the spread of Maoism in Cambodia, then the PRC embassy in Phnom Penh was mission control. It distributed Maoist propaganda and operated as the principal distribution center for Chinese-language media. The embassy was overt in its encouragement of local Chinese to imitate the Red Guards and involved itself publicly in local politics.¹¹⁰ For instance, after a Phnom Penh newspaper decried the Cultural Revolution and accused the embassy of subversion, an embassy spokesperson responded in defense of local Chinese participation in activities "that venerated Chairman Mao and demonstrated patriotic devotion to the motherland." The true subversives, whom he urged in a 28 May 1967 open letter that was broadcast on radio in Phnom Penh two days later, were Chiang Kai-shek supporters. A second response unnerved Sihanouk further in its defense of local Chinese shows of adoration for Mao by reading *Quotations* and hanging Mao portraits: "This is the right of every Chinese . . . [for] only those patriotic Chinese nationals who listen to Chairman Mao's recommendations can constantly apply the friendly policy of the Chinese Government toward Cambodia."¹¹¹

China's "Red Guard Diplomacy" between October 1967 and May 1968 also troubled Sihanouk, but this time to the point of direct criticism. The 1967 Samlaut Rebellion (prelude to the Cambodian Civil War, 1968–1975) by disgruntled peasants in Battambang province, student demonstrations, and criticism from leftist presses in Phnom Penh contributed to his strident tone toward China. After the uprising, he held a press conference in which he criticized recent foreign and domestic policy shifts in Beijing. In a show of his turn to the right, Sihanouk spoke out against China's Cultural Revolution–motivated shift toward

intervention in Cambodian affairs, particularly in supporting the Pol Pot-led CPK after his 1965–1966 visit.¹¹² To him, China had “gone astray. . . . Our great friend is walking on the wrong path and making a great mistake on this false road.” If China were to continue along this road, he continued, “it will make the entire world turn its back; this would not be good. It is inadvisable for China to intervene in the sovereignty of others.”¹¹³ Although Mao and his lieutenants were quick to appease Sihanouk by inviting him to a lavish Beijing residence throughout the late 1960s, the Cambodian leader remained suspicious of Chinese links to Cambodian progressives within and outside his government.¹¹⁴

Quotations from Chairman Mao was tantamount to a revolutionary bible in the 1960s. The significant efforts undertaken by Beijing’s FLP and IB to translate and distribute *Quotations* transmitted Maoism effectively, as copies popped up in the streets and classrooms of Phnom Penh to incite radical activism. More broadly, Maoist philosophy and strategy via *Quotations* made accessible “democratic centralism, the critique of Confucian humanism, self-criticism, the ‘creative masses,’ [and] the pre-eminence of ideological struggle” for millions of people outside China for the first time.¹¹⁵

Through mass translation and distribution efforts, the CCP positioned Maoism as essential wisdom and the PRC as a major Communist nation at the center of the internationalist movement. But the CCP’s desire to provide spiritual and ideological inspiration notwithstanding, the content that CCP agencies exported still needed to “speak” to foreign revolutionaries who received Maoism. As an ideological system, exported Maoism’s prominent features had to relate to specific conditions of national situations.

“A True Bastion of Iron”: The Content of Exported Maoism

As important as CCP efforts to export Maoism were to its spread outside China, the content of exported Maoism—the ideological system inherent to it—formed an equally powerful force behind its global reception. Contradictions, self-reliance, and class analyses were all themes that emerged in revolutionary intellectual circles and reappeared in progressive publications. This section identifies four defining components of exported Maoism: (1) a revolutionary base (peasants’ significant revolutionary role under proletarian leadership), (2) a military strategy (people’s war) that could succeed if the revolutionary party surrounded the cities with the countryside while observing the mass line in a people’s army, (3) a method by which to overcome imperialism (New Democ-

racy), and (4) a method to apply Marxism-Leninism to concrete national realities.

Importantly, for connecting Maoism in China to its manifestation in Cambodia, Pol Pot listed virtually the same components of Maoism for the CPK's ideological components in 1977: (1) the establishment of a party and a solid leadership core; (2) the formation of a powerful united national front; (3) the solidification of a formidable revolutionary army; (4) an analysis of the classes of society; (5) contradictions; (6) practice; (7) the formation of revolutionary support bases for the campaign; (8) the role of the campaign and villages in the revolutionary struggle; (9) revolutionary violence; (10) the strategy of people's war; and (11) revolutionary culture, literature, and art.¹¹⁶ He disaggregated certain parts of Maoism, listing more ideological components than did Mao to stress the CPK's ideological originality.

A United Front from Below: The Peasant Revolutionary Base

Mao's writings argued for a proletarian-led revolution in which peasants, who held great revolutionary potential, played a significant role. He regarded China's peasantry (nearly 70 percent of the rural populace) as the revolution's "biggest motive force" and "natural and most reliable ally of the proletariat."¹¹⁷ The CCP revolution in the Jiangxi Soviet had been a purely poor peasant affair, which is the primary reason for its failure. Mao knew that a vanguard solely of poor peasants and farm laborers was insufficient for a revolution because the "median voters" in rural areas were middle peasants rather than poor ones. The united front then included middle and rich peasants, and even landlords. Mao and the CCP knew, however, that the workers were to lead the movement, with the Chinese rural sector providing the numbers that it needed to win.

Mao's advocacy for a worker-peasant alliance held the most significance, though, because the urban proletariat was numerically insignificant in most of the underdeveloped world. Predominantly agricultural economies nevertheless held untapped revolutionary potential, as Lin Biao contended in his 1965 clarion call for world revolution:

Taking the entire globe, if North America and Western Europe can be called "the cities of the world," then Asia, Africa, and Latin America constitute "the rural areas of the world." Since World War II . . . the people's revolutionary movement in Asia, Africa, and Latin America has been growing vigorously. In a sense, the contemporary world revolution also

presents a picture of the encirclement of cities by the rural areas. In the final analysis, the whole cause of world revolution hinges on the revolutionary struggles of the Asian, African and Latin American peoples who make up the overwhelming majority of the world's population. The socialist countries should regard it as their internationalist duty to support the people's revolutionary struggles in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.¹¹⁸

Several key features of Maoism during the Cultural Revolution—the rural ideal of uniting living with working and antiurbanism, for example—are evident.¹¹⁹ These features characterized newly independent Asian countries in which a stark urban/rural divide had risen in tandem with capitalist development. Mao's (and Lin's) emphasis on incorporating peasants into a mass movement resonated strongly with radical intellectuals who sought to reverse this mistreatment.

One of the CPK ministers, Hu Nim, devoted much of his career to alleviating peasant exploitation and recognizing them as a demographic with great potential. The categories and definitions that he used in his 1965 doctoral dissertation (chapter 4) drew directly from Mao's analysis of China's class structure and from "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan," respectively. Nim argued that in Cambodia, land rent was often paid in labor through sharecropping or in kind with paddy, both of which represented landlords' and rich peasants' "direct exploitation" of the poorest peasants.¹²⁰ His reading of Mao's works and creative engagement with the Chinese leader's ideas to suit Cambodian realities show the beginnings of an attempt by a Cambodian intellectual to indigenize Maoism.

People's War

Arguably the most influential component of exported Maoism was Mao's strategy that combined guerrilla warfare, popular outreach, and socioeconomic reform to unite workers and peasants in wartime.¹²¹ Mao did not argue simply that popular support was a sufficient condition for victory; rather, the people's support was necessary (the political side of people's war), and it must combine with guerrilla warfare (military strategy) to bleed an enemy dry. People's war, he later contended, was to "fight, fail, fail again, fight again . . . till their victory; that is the logic of the people, and they too will never go against this logic."¹²² People's war took on a legendary character during the radical foreign policy years of the Cultural Revolution, as Maoism won appeal outside China as a military doctrine. Lin Biao expounded that the Chi-

nese revolution proved the “invincibility” of people’s war and its “great contribution to the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed nations and peoples throughout the world.”¹²³

People’s war as a life-and-death struggle in which revolutionary violence was the “feature” and not the “bug” was compelling for the CPK. As the CCP shifted from a gradual bloc-within takeover to Bolshevization to armed struggle after 1927, so too did the CPK in its insurrection to overthrow Sihanouk, then Lon Nol’s Khmer Republic (1970–1975). CPK foreign minister Ieng Sary credited people’s war in a characteristically Maoist statement in 1970: “The decisive factor of success, as our experience has shown, is man; the decisive weapon is his high political consciousness which makes it possible for him to get a clear picture of the real nature of the enemy and his fortes and foibles. . . . We have taken many democratic measures to mobilize the poor peasants . . . to free them from old social structures and raise production.”¹²⁴ CPK prime minister Pol Pot also recognized that the peasants formed the fundamental force of the Cambodian revolution, but only when the CPK “went to work among the people secretly [did] the revolutionary content penetrate the people at the grassroots.” In a 29 September 1977 address, he recalled that the CPK “made use of many different forms, in the manner of a people’s war.”¹²⁵ As CPK deputy secretary Nuon Chea stated, “If we have planes, naval vessels, tanks and artillery but do not adhere to the principles of people’s war and the military lines of our revolutionary organization, we will not have an army as strong as the one [that] we had in the struggle against the US imperialists.”¹²⁶ A people’s war was thus the most effective method for hinterland bases to overwhelm urban centers wherein the international capitalist forces that perpetuated inequality resided.

New Democracy

Originally a speech that Mao delivered to cultural workers in Yan’an in 1940, “On New Democracy” emphasized the Chinese revolution’s global character. New Democracy won appeal as a model of state building for revolutionary regimes, whereby after protracted warfare a Communist Party could initiate a two-stage transition to socialism.

National liberation, Mao urged, was necessary to end China’s semifeudal, semicolonial status, and a new Chinese nation and culture were necessary to break with erroneous past or foreign ones.¹²⁷ He revised the classic Marxist formulation of the stages of historical development, with the progression from semifeudal, semicolonial societies to New Democracy and, finally, to socialism. Membership was to be broad in the early stage, but upon the transition

to socialism, only workers and peasants could form the vanguard.¹²⁸ In so doing, New Democracy became one of the pillars of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist canon and an essential feature of the ideological system of exported Maoism.

A major adherent of New Democracy was Pol Pot, who regarded it as a foundational revolutionary principle.¹²⁹ CPK ministers Hou Yuon, Khieu Samphan, and Pol Pot regarded New Democracy as a comprehensive guide for revolution in a colonial or semicolonial state.¹³⁰ Pol Pot devoted much of a 1977 speech to recounting the CPK's "national democratic revolution" under the CPK's leadership from 1960 to 1975. He detailed, above all, how the CPK moved from people's war to a new democratic revolution against the state.¹³¹

Indigenizing Marxism-Leninism

Mao proposed "the Sinification of Marxism" because, to him, Marxism was only useful in a national form and not as abstract dogma. An important effort by a non-Chinese party to apply Marxism-Leninism to concrete national realities was in Cambodia. Pol Pot's Maoist-inspired 1977 speech reflects his exposure to and espousal of Mao's notion of applying Marxism according to concrete national conditions: "In 1957 we created a committee in order to prepare the Party's political line . . . [and it] studied and researched the history of our people's struggle, summing up the positive and negative experiences in order to draw lessons which could help illustrate the Party's line. . . . In light of these experiences, the committee worked out a draft proposal for the Party's political line, based upon Marxism-Leninism and the principles of independence, sovereignty and self-reliance, in order to be masters of our own destiny, applying Marxism-Leninism to the concrete realities of Kampuchea and Kampuchean society."¹³² To adapt Marxism-Leninism to concrete national realities through a Maoist approach entailed this process of determining theory through practice, from which the conditions, whether historical, social, or cultural, emerged as building blocks of the revolutionary party's body politic. Thereafter, the revolutionary party could make the new ideology congruent with contemporary norms that its stage of practice revealed to it. The process entailed the enmeshment of charismatic dimensions with rational-bureaucratic features to recruit membership from "traditional" peasant communities.¹³³

The ideological system of exported Maoism consists of useful parts that revolutionaries could interpret and apply in a range of different ways. Mao's emphasis on including rather than occluding peasants in the revolutionary vanguard base struck a chord with radicals who lived and operated within the largely agrarian world. Strategies such as people's war and New Democracy,

meanwhile, gave these same revolutionary intellectuals an “impregnable fortress” or “true bastion of iron” (*tongqiang tiebi*) from which to defeat their powerful opponents and make a rapid transition to socialism. The Sinification of Marxism-Leninism showed how to take the practice of revolution and formulate a new theory grounded firmly in the specific norms of each revolutionary situation. The new ideology could then appeal to a wider audience that viewed the peasant visionary (though originally a social strata outsider) as the charismatic leader. That leader, as a “man of prowess,” could inspire others because of agreed procedures and rally people to commit themselves fully to their political initiatives.

We Are the Third World: The Conditions and Audience of Exported Maoism

Foreign policy shifts in China that inspired Mao’s three worlds theory (*sange shijiede lilun*) help us understand even more the conditions that underlay Maoism’s reception in Cambodia. As relations between Beijing and Washington warmed, the CCP recognized Soviet social imperialism, not American capitalist imperialism, as the largest threat to global unity.¹³⁴ Although tensions between foreign policy moderates and radicals had calmed by the end of 1969, the early 1970s marked Beijing’s renewed interest in revolutions outside China.¹³⁵ Mao suggested forming a broad front of nonaligned Third World nations that were committed to socialism but unable to implement it either by proxy or directly.¹³⁶ In line with its prevailing strategy to form an international order free from superpower domination, Beijing granted “favorable loans and technical expertise for massive capital-intensive projects” to newly independent nations.¹³⁷ Economic aid alone did not foster unity between China and its new allies. Instead, semicolonial conditions in underdeveloped countries like Cambodia, paired with superpower exploitation, engendered exported Maoism’s spread in the 1960s as an ideological system to resuscitate stagnant revolutionary movements.

The three worlds theory began in the pages of Mao’s writings on the “intermediate zone” concept. After the Sino-Soviet Split, Mao realigned the nations of the world into politico-economic camps marked by patterns of exploitation rather than ideological affinity or diplomatic allegiance.¹³⁸ China’s standing, he held, did not rival the “First World” United States or Soviet Union. Neither did it rank among those allied to either superpower. Instead, China belonged to the “Third World,” a point on which Mao elaborated in a 1974 interview: “We are the Third World. . . . The US and the Soviet Union

have a lot of atomic bombs, and they are richer. Europe, Japan, Australia and Canada, of the Second World, do not possess so many atomic bombs and are not so rich as the First World, but richer than the Third World.”¹³⁹ China’s experience as a semicolonial, underdeveloped country and its successful resistance to imperialism and rapid transition to socialism were reasons for Mao’s alignment of China in the Third World camp alongside the world’s exploited peoples.¹⁴⁰

Mao viewed the Third World most of all as a rising tide, the world’s “peripheries” that will surround and overwhelm the First and Second World “cores.” The “east wind,” he noted, “is prevailing over the west wind. . . . The forces of socialism are overwhelmingly superior to forces of imperialism. . . . The Western countries have been left behind and we now clearly have the upper hand.”¹⁴¹ The war between imperialism and socialism was inevitable, for the American capitalist and Soviet socialist imperialist worlds exploited the nonaligned Third World for their respective Cold War ambitions. Only when exploited nations united and accepted Third World designation not as a marker of backwardness but as a framework for autonomous socialist development and peaceful cooperation with China as their rear guard could they forge a path toward world peace and prosperity for all peoples.¹⁴²

Conditions in Cambodia

Global capitalism, underdevelopment, mass poverty, and the disaggregation of wealth also played parts in positioning Maoism in the global spotlight, including in Cambodia, where a precapitalist economy experienced hasty market integration. French-Egyptian Maoist Samir Amin’s 1957 doctoral dissertation, a major influence on CPK figures such as Khieu Samphan and Hu Nim, argued that precapitalist economies were integrated forcibly into a world market by Euro-American capitalist imperialism to supply inexpensive labor in service to foreign interests. The principal contradiction of this international capitalist system was between monopoly capital (represented by towns/cores) and the overexploited rural masses of the peripheries. Underdeveloped economies were elements in this world capitalist economy, and capitalist cores exploited precapitalist peripheries through structural adjustment to capital accumulation.¹⁴³

Instead of uplifting newly independent nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America to higher standards of living and unprecedented economic progress, the hasty integration of precapitalist economies into the global capitalist market “led an original, limited, and particular development of capitalism.” Once

a country with a previously precapitalist economy was integrated into a commodity goods market, the new structure grafted forcefully capitalist structural elements on precapitalist ones. The “augmented degree” of capitalist inequality, Amin noted, “stemmed from the destruction of the handicraft industry, which [because of this destruction] deprives a considerable fraction of the population of its income (the income of the enterprise then concentrating in the hands of fewer artisans than contractors) and then results in the subsequent concentration of this income in the hands of ulterior enterprises.”¹⁴⁴ In this arrangement, development and underdevelopment were “sides of the same coin” of capitalist expansion.¹⁴⁵ Small elites within the Third World, and more developed consumerist mass-market cores abroad, imported luxury goods produced through unsustainably cheap low-wage labor. The result was the entrenchment of a “cyclical phenomenon” of exploitation in which subsistence farmers and handicraftsmen bore the brunt of an “imbalance between savings and investment . . . the capacity for production and the company’s capacity for consumption.” China’s model rejected models of consumption and labor organization that were endemic to capitalism.¹⁴⁶ Autarky, Amin concluded, was the ideal system for Third World economies, a proposition that was part of the blueprint for Communist Cambodia.

China’s alternative model captured the minds of Cambodian progressives who sought to chart a new course for Cambodian society and the national economy. In such inquests, Maoist works surfaced among intellectuals as a critical interpretive paradigm to understand Cambodia’s positionality as an exploited country on the world’s stage, and later, as a program to smash exploitative foreign interests and reform the country. This was because Cambodia fell under the Third World rubric as Mao and Amin described; it was a newly independent country (from France, 1953) and confronted problems of development after World War II.

Indeed, Cambodia’s experience as a French protectorate in which colonizers (1863–1953) mostly abrogated building infrastructure set independent Cambodia on an uphill climb economically. French social scientists preoccupied themselves with constructions of a Cambodian national identity in terms of polarization: its zenith (builders of Angkor) measured against its nadir (territorial decline and subjugation).¹⁴⁷ Numerous postindependence problems were because of French neglect, as the French *mission civilisatrice* held Khmers in low regard “as children to be helped upward.” The French held the Cambodge protectorate (*Protectorat français du Cambodge*; *Prades Kampuchea Krom Ānānigam Bārāṇ*, 1867–1945, 1945–1953) primarily as a “colony of exploitation” that must “pay its way, financed by the most onerous taxes in Indochina . . . to exist,

economically, for the benefit of France.”¹⁴⁸ The lone exceptions were in rubber and corn cultivation to meet French quotas.¹⁴⁹ Colonial authorities’ unwillingness to develop infrastructure cut the colonial capital of Phnom Penh off from rural areas, though neglect allowed many Khmers to preserve local customs without significant French interference.¹⁵⁰

Neither did the French consider delivering on the overarching “civilizing mission” by investing in local education. France’s administrative system instead guaranteed that few Khmers could enter into the civil service, because many Vietnamese from the French colony in South Vietnam (Cochinchina) filled most service positions. By 1920–1921, for example, there were only nineteen Khmer students at the Indochinese University (Université Indochinoise) in Hanoi. By Cambodia’s 1953 independence, only 120,000 Khmer children had access to primary schools, while 77,000 remained in unreformed pagoda schools, and only one high school (Lycée Sisowath) operated in service to a kingdom of three million people. The combination of French indifference toward developing Cambodia and its often-cruel exploitation of Khmer labor paved the way for large socioeconomic gaps and ensured Cambodia’s underdevelopment after independence.¹⁵¹

Ongoing economic development issues in Cambodia that were unaddressed by independence made Cambodia fecund grounds for Maoism’s popularity among progressive intellectuals. One such thinker was Khieu Samphan, who argued that Cambodia’s underdevelopment was because of its international integration within an American framework that forced the poor country to submit to a mechanism that devalued agriculture and handicrafts. Its precapitalist structure, although fortified, remained in a cycle of export production.¹⁵²

For this reason, the privileged few who attended Lycée Sisowath and studied abroad in France sought out radical alternatives to realize self-conscious, autonomous development in Cambodia. As Pol Pot described in a 1977 speech: “[Our] economy was, by its essence, entirely dominated by imperialism. It was the same for culture. As for the nature of society and the way of life, they were under imperialist influence, especially at the level of the ruling circles. We defined Kampuchea [Cambodia] then as a country subordinate to imperialism, a semi-colonial country. This analysis should allow everyone to be convinced that there were contradictions. Kampuchea was certainly not wholly dependent, but it was half [dependent]. If that were so, were there contradictions? Certainly!”¹⁵³ Cambodia’s position as a largely agrarian country with a widening gap between urban-based intellectual elites and the majority rural workers entrenched a stark urban-rural divide. Cambodian revolutionaries theorized peasant disdain for the cities based on a perception that cities were “rabbit-warrens of vice, filth, corruption, and disease [and] symbolized all that

was wrong with Cambodia and its rightful place in the universe.”¹⁵⁴ This perspective, although hardly representative of the whole country, examined peasant suffering through a Maoist lens to propose an autarkical model of antiurbanization, agrarian reform, and industrial development.¹⁵⁵

The core ideas of Mao’s three worlds theory fit certain needs, explained the experience of the peasants, enabled them to imagine what to do, provided a vocabulary to mobilize peasants, and offered useful models for organizing an insurgency. Mao’s stress on the revolutionary potential of peasants allowed Communist Parties in predominantly agrarian economies to incorporate the majority of their populations into the revolutionary struggle. People’s war provided a strategy that empowered numerically disadvantaged combatants to defeat superior foes, which was most resonant among the ongoing movement in Cambodia in the late 1960s and early 1970s. New Democracy presented an alternative socialist modernist course that stood outside either American or Soviet purviews, which was central to the Cambodian Communists’ designs for their nation. Mao’s emphasis on creative adaptation to concrete conditions meant that unlike with Soviet Marxism-Leninism, the realization of Marxism-Leninism was in a national setting.

Importantly, the constituent parts of the ideological system of Maoism, including military and political strategies, allowed for creative adaptation rather than strict adherence to a Soviet line. An example, and one that the remainder of the book explores in depth, is when exported Maoism arose in Cambodian circles as the third sword of Marxism-Leninism and a way to break free from a Vietnamese-directed line. Progressive intellectuals regarded it initially as a useful lens through which to interpret Cambodia’s postindependence underdevelopment and exploitation, and then as a program for waging revolution against Sihanouk and Lon Nol, respectively.

Conclusion

Chinese foreign policy shifts sowed seeds of interest in China as a model example with Maoism as a global ideological system. China’s “Bandung Spirit” years placed it at the forefront of the nonaligned movement and spirited genuine fraternal ties between Beijing and newly independent countries such as Cambodia. The Sino-Soviet Split, however, marked the CCP’s transition to actively seeking to export Maoism outside China’s borders as a counter to the Soviets, who, in Mao’s view, had become revisionist. This outreach involved inviting revolutionaries who were not national leaders to visit Beijing, including Pol Pot. Such visits had the desired effect of guiding foreign revolutionaries

to Maoism for their own struggles, and in the case of the Cambodian movement, it solidified China as an important strategic ally. The radical stage of Chinese foreign policy, meanwhile, amped up and intensified the CCP's effort to export China's revolution to the world, first rhetorically and then through its own brand of agitprop. The systematic translation and diffusion of Mao's writings by the FLP and IB put Mao's works in classrooms, backstreets, and intellectual circles throughout the developing world. Mao's works became reference guides in dozens of languages, and Maoism by extension became accessible, relatable, and useful worldwide.

Mao's identification of China as a Third World and nonaligned country positioned it as a positive force that could aid countries in breaking the cycle of dependency. Maoism as an ideological system stressed peasant inclusion, a concrete military strategy, a two-stage process for socialist transition, and indigenous Marxism-Leninism to suit specific historical conditions. Because foreign-trained CPK ministers did not uniformly have deep connections with their prospective peasant bases across the country, they had to ground their ideologies in contemporary norms as Mao had done with Sinification. Altogether, these constituent parts allowed for revolutionary intellectuals in semi-colonial, semifeudal countries to adapt Maoism creatively and normatively. As the continued exploitation of the rural poor by forced inclusion into an imbalanced international market entrenched gaping socio-economic disequilibria, radical intellectuals came to regard Maoism as a theoretical lens through which to interpret inequality and as a method to reverse this imbalance.

The next chapters focus specifically on Cambodia to examine how Maoism first entered the thought streams of Cambodian Communist intellectuals. These chapters explore how intellectuals turned CPK figures Pol Pot, Hou Yuon, and Hu Nim engaged with Maoism to make preliminary designs on what became Democratic Kampuchea. As these chapters show, the intellectuals who became CPK ministers diagnosed their nation as semicolonial and semifeudal because of the Maoist vocabulary and critical interpretive paradigm. After reading Maoist texts, they espoused Mao's analyses and applied them as explanatory tools for contextualizing their homeland's positionality in the global capitalist market system. Maoism came to represent the alternative ideological system that they needed. In using Maoism as a "magic weapon" and lens, one could identify class difference and patterns of capitalist/imperialist exploitation in new and relevant ways. Just as easily, one could also strive for transformative societal change through armed struggle and develop socialism in a new Communist state.

CHAPTER 3

The Origins of Cambodia's Maoist Vision

Revolutionary Intellectuals and Maoism, 1949–1955

The secret of liberty is to enlighten men, as that of tyranny is to keep them in ignorance.

—Maximilien Robespierre, public statement, 1792

It's the well-behaved children that make the most formidable revolutionaries. They don't say a word, they don't hide under the table, they eat only one piece of chocolate at a time. But later on, they make society pay dearly.

—Jean-Paul Sartre, *Les Mains Sales*, 1948

The same stages of production, transmission, and reception of the expanded traveling theory model guided the emergence of Maoism in Cambodia. Upon their 1949 arrival in Marseilles after a long trip aboard the SS *Jamaïque*, future CPK leader Pol Pot (1925–1998) and his one-time minister Hou Yuon were hardly politically engaged students and radical ideologues. In Paris, however, these men set foot on a “playground of the globe’s vanguardist *bohèmes*.” Several Third World intellectuals, notably Deng Xiaoping and Ho Chi Minh, had lived here, and after World War II they “came to play outstanding roles in their home countries’ political and intellectual lives.”¹ Pol Pot, Yuon, and in 1955 Hu Nim were no exception. Shortly after their arrivals and enrollments in university programs, what became the Paris Group of Khmer Communist intellectuals developed an attraction to radicalism and enthusiasm for China. Their curiosity led them to identify the Chinese experience as “more akin to theirs . . . and more contemporary than the Russian Bolshevik Revolution in 1917.”²

The atmosphere, events, and ideas that these intellectuals encountered in Paris set them on a lifelong course of radicalism. As Pol Pot’s biographer Philip Short once intimated, it was in the early 1950s in Paris that the future CPK leader and his comrades “laid down the ideological foundations on which the Khmer nightmare would be built.” The “foreign intellectual legacy” that underlined it was “first and foremost French.”³ The social experiences of Pol Pot,

Yuon, and Nim as students in the anti-imperial metropole guided them toward radical alternatives to the so-called democracy in Cambodia that had been a plagued process since independence. The foundational radical intellectuals of Democratic Kampuchea did not become Maoists overnight. Nor did they simply graft Maoism onto the Cambodian situation. Their reception of Maoism was dialectical. Each Paris Group member spoke back by interpreting Maoism and adapting it to realities on the ground (what Pol Pot termed as “concrete realities” [*réalités concrètes*] to distinguish from mere abstractions, an homage to Mao’s Sinification of Marxism-Leninism). Their respective engagements with Maoism led to the production of a Cambodian Maoism that spoke to Cambodia’s historical situation as an exploited and largely rural Third World country.

A colonial upbringing, French education, and 1950s Paris provided the intellectual world, whereas Maoism emerged as the ideological system with which to interpret and rectify Cambodia’s negative historical situation. But Cambodian Maoism, like Cambodian nationalism before it, was “never a single ‘movement,’ but a travelogue of diverse itineraries, the constellation and intersection of myriad journeys by individuals who . . . coined ideas of the modern Khmer nation and, through their travels . . . gave these ideas national currency.”⁴ Before Pol Pot, Hou Yuon, and Hu Nim became the CPK’s intellectual thrust, they were networked intellectuals in a situated thinking who responded to crises of capitalist exploitation, political corruption, and socio-economic disequilibria by taking a Maoist turn. Mao’s ideas found currency because of their fit in the Cambodian context. Maoism also offered “a general abstract pattern of socialist revolution” and a “complete package of ways and means to realize national union against foreign intervention, control over the peasant masses, [and] strict methods to organize the Party and army.”⁵ But Maoism was more than a set of strategies; rather, as an ideological system, it represented a palimpsest on which the Khmer intellectuals could draw “lines of established cultural understandings.”⁶

An important difference between Mao and the Paris Group is that the latter had some body of theory that aligned relatively well with the circumstances in Cambodia. Mao did not have that and had to invent it mostly *ex nihilo*. Paris Group members also profited from rare access to education. Hou Yuon and Hu Nim were the benefactors of a private education. Yuon, in particular, was a rigorous thinker and attained a level of education that was not accessible to Mao in his time. Pol Pot was, too, but despite recalling that he “worked rather hard” and “was a fairly good student,” he did not care much for his education (taking no exams and losing his government scholarship) and left Paris without a degree.⁷

To determine how much Pol Pot, Yuon, and Nim were influenced by radical avant-garde writings, one must trace their passages through spaces, intellectual and geographic, transforming and transformed. This chapter uses the phases of reception and adaptation to guide us through the Khmer intellectuals' encounters en route to their Maoist awakenings. It explains the fit between foreign theories of Marxism-Leninism, Stalinism, and, later, Maoism and these Cambodian intellectuals by using the variables of textual language (impact/relational), historical circumstances (conditions of reception), and the process whereby such materials became important to others (practical/normative). The chapter then explores the first example of the intellectual adaptation stage in the Cambodian case, whereby the future CPK intellectual thrust applied Maoism on paper. Pol Pot's handwritten 1952 article "Monarchy or Democracy?" (*Rājādhipateyy ī Prajādhipateyy?*) represents the first of three foundational national texts of DK and serves as an example of the Cambodian intellectuals' preradical thought.

French Connection: Impact/Relational Reception and the Conditions of Maoism's Emergence in Cambodia, 1949–1965

For decades, the highly secretive CPK eluded scholarly classification. Party leaders declared total uniqueness because the Cambodian situation did not fit an existing model, whereas earlier scholarly descriptions of the CPK's program characterized it as "rabidly fascist," a form of "medieval barbarity," or obsessed with past glory and national revival. More recently, scholars have emphasized CPK nationalism and its Vietnamese ideological ties.⁸ A relevant description for this study is that the CPK was far from *sui generis*, antimodern, or bereft of cultural and intellectual sophistication, but in fact high modernist, "Maoist," and "hyper-Maoist." Supporters of this premise identify similarities in rhetoric, revolution, and socioeconomic transformation but fail to explain how and why Maoism arose as a fit.⁹ Surely, a more thorough explanation of how and why Maoism and not Soviet Marxism-Leninism triumphed in the CPK intellectuals' thinking is necessary.

To classify the CPK more accurately as Maoist, then, one must conduct a genealogical study of Cambodian Maoism that accounts for social experiences, travels, encounters, and ever-shifting *weltanschauungen*. This section analyzes first the future CPK intellectuals' situated-ness in an oppressed environment under French colonial rule. It then examines how they engaged extant and foreign ideas in their intellectual milieus, which brings us to their engagements

with Maoism in the CPK's Yan'an, 1950s Paris. It is therefore possible to observe the *impact/relational* and *conditions of reception* phases to uncover the important, yet oft-overlooked, link among French classrooms, progressive intellectual circles in 1950s Paris, and the Cambodian Communist movement. The passages of Pol Pot, Hou Yuon, and Hu Nim from the Cambodian countryside to provincial cores, and again to national (Phnom Penh) and transnational (Paris) epicenters, led to their reimagining of their world with radical thought informing a wholly new perception.

Colonial Context: Language and Historical Situation

Important to the Paris Group's social experiences was the nature of colonial rule in the French protectorate of Cambodia. Though they were born into a colonial rather than a semicolonial setting, their early life experiences and education were, like Mao's, shaped by local traditions (Theravada Buddhism, for "doctrine/teachings of the monk elders") and foreign influences (French arts). French efforts to protect Khmer lands and the history, language, and culture predominant within them culminated in the inception of a French construct of Cambodian "nation-ness."¹⁰ It was not an *ex nihilo* phenomenon. Outside ideas entered new sociocultural milieus, and those who received such ideas engaged with them dialectically to form a national consciousness. Pol Pot and his companions carried this same national consciousness with them when they boarded the SS *Jamaïque* in Saigon and set sail for France in 1949.¹¹

The five salient factors in Cambodia that spurred the Cambodian national consciousness and provided the *mise en scène* for the Paris Group's intellectual journeys are space, history, race, language, and nation. For the first, Thongchai Winichakul's concept of the geo-body (operations of the technology of territoriality that create nationhood spatially) embodies the French establishment of the Cambodia protectorate as "creating" Cambodia as a discursive construct.¹² Before the French advent, the Cambodian realm was a "sacralised topography of places looked after by local spirits (*mesa*, *nakta*) or places where sacred rituals were performed . . . an indigenous map of the whole realm before the map of modern geography was introduced."¹³ Yet French efforts to preserve Khmer lands as a geographic space that France could rule as a protectorate while "imposing nationalistic images of domination" (French superiority over Khmer weakness) unwittingly manufactured a Cambodian national consciousness. Centuries of territorial decline and expansions into Khmer lands by more powerful neighbors in Siam and Vietnam had reduced the former great kingdom's territory significantly. King Norodom's (1834–1904) request for French intervention to save his kingdom led to the colonial

entrenchment of Cambodia as a bounded (and mapped) strategic buffer zone between independent Siam and French possessions in Indochina (especially rigid boundaries to favor their colony Cochinchina). In so doing, though, the French safeguarded a “Cambodian” territorial integrity by dint of this formal entrenchment of national boundaries.¹⁴

As for the second, French experts framed Khmer history in such a way that stressed French salvation, and yet again unwittingly, the colonizers inspired a collective consciousness. As French philosopher Ernst Renan once observed, “Forgetting, I would even say historical error, is an essential factor in the creation of a nation and it is for this reason that the progress of historical studies often poses a threat to nationality.”¹⁵ French aims to rescue Khmer history were beset by a belief that its colonial subjects had “lost” or “forgotten” it. French social scientists’ fascination with Khmer art and culture constituted an expansive “rediscovery” effort that monopolized historical writing on the Khmer past, revived Khmer arts, and built museums to house artifacts that the French viewed as signifiers of a once great civilization.¹⁶ Phnom Penh-born George Groslier (1889–1945), for instance, established the School of Cambodian Arts (SCA) in 1920. The SCA quickly became the epicenter from which scholars broadcasted a type of “phantasmatic Indochina” fantasy that had captured the French imagination.¹⁷ The enormous collection of Khmer art in the National Museum of Asian Arts-Guimet (Musée national des arts asiatiques-Guimet) in Paris is also testament to this French obsession. French scholars soon flocked to the French School of the Far East in Hanoi for rigorous “rediscovering”; in effect, though, the French reinvented the Khmer past and shaped senses of Khmer-ness among locals as they recast this past as a Cambodian one.¹⁸

Third, generations of Khmer kings’ ruling practice through loose networks of nonterritorial personal relationships had established no significant Khmer ethnic solidarity from as recently as the mid-nineteenth century. The French arrival and subsequent idealizations of the Khmer past, however, helped develop a Cambodian nationalism.¹⁹ Reminiscent of the late Qing reformers’ articulation of Chinese racial identity as an extension of traditional lineage (the “Yellow Emperor” as the “progenitor of the yellow race”),²⁰ French experts conveniently and anachronistically linked the Khmers of the historical past with their *cambodgien* subjects. Present-day subjects and their identity became something ahistorical that stared backward through time to link with the Khmer Empire’s original inhabitants and rulers.

At the core was twelfth-century Hindu, then Buddhist temple Angkor Wat, the cornerstone of its builder-king Suryavarman II’s (r. 1113–1150) royal capital of Yaśodharapura. Around this temple complex, French archaeologists, naturalists, and explorers such as Henri Mouhot (1826–1861) and Étienne Aymonier

(1844–1929) constructed a romanticized, idyllic Khmer past with their own self-perception of greatness. Their mission was to awaken a civilization that, in the French regard, was “for centuries now . . . mentally retarded, more or less asleep.”²¹ The result was a temple complex of a different type: the simultaneous “physical constellation of Angkor” and “creation of ‘false’ or induced memories rather than the recovery of memory.”²² French idealizations of Khmer civilization as “unrivalled artists and innovators of the ancient world” alongside the Romans and the Greeks (a shocked Mouhot incorrectly dated its construction to the Roman era) were emblematic of its own relish of an “abundant ornament.” It reflected French experts’ view that Angkor’s “monumental stonework” laid bare “thoughts of eternity, suggesting the timelessness of true human nobility.”²³ But importantly, in rebuilding Angkor Wat and its surrounding temples, the French protectorate falsely and strategically bestowed it with national meaning. Angkor thus became a centerpiece of Khmerness, the “Original Khmer” (*Khmer Toem*).²⁴

Fourth, the vernacularization of Khmer script was inseparable from protectorate officials’ efforts to shape a national Cambodian Buddhism (*Sāsnājāti*, for national religion). In the late nineteenth century, the “Khmer religious imagination” perceived the cosmos as a “morally constructed universe” with many worlds that passed through “cycles of decline that mirrored the contiguous decline and regeneration of adherence to the Dhamma.”²⁵ Khmer Buddhism at this time was centralized in theory because the sovereign granted patronage to the Buddhist community (*Prah Sangha*). In practice, though, local *Sanghas* emerged around kings and were powerful variables in forming close-knit societies. As Khmer lands declined, Khmer Buddhism was tied to the Siamese court of Oudong (Uṭuṅ) until the French arrival.²⁶ French colonial reforms (1897–1920) to safeguard Khmer Buddhism from Siamese influence, which included undercutting and remodeling the royal court, ultimately transformed the Khmer political, religious, and moral order and unwittingly birthed a national Buddhism.²⁷ Other reforms that shaped national Buddhism were the reeducation of monks (Cambodia’s literati class) in Pali and Khmer classics, reorientation in Buddhist norms sans “superstitious” Siamese influences, and the secularization of pagoda (*vatt*) schools where students learned reading, writing, and arithmetic with student advancement to French collèges and lycées.²⁸

Buddhist monks did not simply espouse French reforms uncritically. Instead, monks had considerable agency in their discussions with the French on interpretations of ethics and morality in the Theravada Buddhist canon or in texts from nearby Siam. This set a precedent for intellectuals who, decades later,

engaged with French notions of nationhood, achievement, liberty, and democracy. Royal Library director (1925–1941) and Buddhist Institute founder (1930–1941) Suzanne Karpèles (1890–1968) also aided in establishing the French as cultural custodians of a national Buddhism. In 1926 she founded *Kambuja Surya*, the first-ever Khmer-language journal, and launched several works by the Royal Library (Bibliothèque royale) and the Buddhist Institute (L'Institut bouddhique) on Cambodian history, culture, and religion. Each of these institutions helped engender the rise of print culture in the protectorate. Karpèles's institutions, importantly, entrenched Buddhism's inseparability from Cambodian nationalism by making sacred and modern Khmer texts accessible to a new generation of monks and laity.²⁹

Nascent Cambodian nationalism differed from its Vietnamese counterpart in its lack of a centuries-old tradition of patriotic resistance against foreign invaders. However, French officials' mass literacy campaigns in the 1930s to promote the Khmer language as the lingua franca of instruction and print media initiated Khmers' identification of a Khmer *nation*. Previously, French experts such as Étienne Aymonier had perpetuated the *mythos* of a Cambodian "race of people perennially attached to the idea of not separating its own existence from that of the royal family [with] the king [as] the living incarnation, the august and supreme personification of the nation."³⁰ By the 1930s, an emergent Khmer intellectual class could spread its own thoughts about their identity. The magazine *Nagaravatta* (Temple City) expressed Khmer nationalism for the first time in 1936, and the first novel in Khmer, "Great Lake" (*Tonlé Sap*), followed in 1938. This trend gained momentum and, in some instances, virulence in the years preceding World War II. The Khmer reading public soon unified its own mass media "internally as a community but cutting it off from others," which led to a larger sense of "We-ness."³¹

Yet French and doing French things emerged as signifiers of status in a stratified colonial setting. Upon the 1936 grand opening of Lycée Sisowath, a French-language private school that offered secondary instruction in Khmer, the protectorate's elite lined up to gain entry. Here, the young men who formed the CPK's intellectual thrust met for the first time.³²

A handful of French experts influenced the worldviews of Khmer intellectuals and, later, instilled in future nationalists a sense of Cambodian national consciousness. As the French proselytized past Khmer greatness and tried to "rescue" Khmer culture, Khmers listened to, and engaged with, these constructs. Locals soon developed a "moral authority from old sayings fused with new meaning," namely "We Khmers" (*Khmer yoeñ*) and "masters of the country" (*mejā sruk*).³³ Among intellectuals who experienced the French

construct firsthand were the future Paris Group, whose members initiated Cambodia's Communist movement and were standard-bearers of an authentic Khmer nationalism (Pol Pot, most notably).

From Paddy to Paris: Intellectual Origins of the Cambodian Maoist Vision

The experiences of Pol Pot, Hou Yuon, and Hu Nim in Cambodia and in France led them through intellectual spaces that shaped their reception of Maoism. Their education in the French protectorate compelled them to turn their interest in the French arts into overseas studies. These young men were then swept up by a tide of avant-gardism in Paris whereby they developed revolutionary ideas as students. Participation in Marxist reading groups followed, and in such groups, they read and debated in French and Khmer what revolution meant to them on their terms. Gradually, these increasingly progressive students regarded Marxism-Leninism as a means by which to liberate Cambodia from French colonial government rule and, later, capitalist market exploitation.

Developments in Paris and crises in Phnom Penh then drove them toward becoming Communists. Membership in the Cercle Marxiste (Marxist Circle) and Stalinist French Communist Party gave them the brass tacks on the leftist canon and organizational structure. As revolutionary intellectuals, they were convinced that Marxism-Leninism, then Maoism, could transform Cambodia from a corrupt state into a modern nation that served the people. Maoism became a major leftist trend among the leftist Cambodian intellectuals by the mid to late 1950s. Decolonization, Soviet revisionism, and China's push to lead the global anti-imperialist struggle propelled alternative interpretations of Marxism-Leninism to the forefront. In different ways and to varying degrees, Mao's writings underpinned the Paris Group's respective diagnoses of problems in Cambodia and informed their proposals for radically altering the country.

From Paddy, 1930–1949

Like Mao Zedong, Pol Pot—the most prominent of the three intellectuals under analysis—had rural upbringings that did not coincide with poverty. The other two, Hou Yuon and Hu Nim, came from humble origins that did not necessarily set them on a course to Paris. Yuon was born in 1930 to mixed Sino-Khmer lineage. His father grew rice and tobacco on the Mekong River in Kampong Cham not too far from Nim's birthplace in Korkor. Nim was a talented student whose parents were landless, and after his father deserted the

family, he took refuge in a pagoda.³⁴ Fellow Sino-Khmer Pol Pot, however, was from wealthier class origins, which afforded him considerable upward social mobility. He was born on 25 May 1925 to a wealthy landowning family in Prek Sbauv village near Kampong Thom. Although he later described himself in an interview as “the son of a peasant who in his childhood had to live a hard life and participate in agricultural work on his father’s land,” his family had the district’s largest property (nine hectares of rice land, draft cattle, and a tile-roofed house).³⁵ Unlike Yuon and Nim, who had to earn their entry the hard way, Pol Pot came from a family whose wealth was so great that it won him admission to an exclusive French-language school.

Until the 1930s, the norm in Cambodia was that few Khmers had access to French education at any level. French colonial administrators favored ethnic Chinese and Vietnamese students almost exclusively for civil service education. Under the puppet king Sisowath Monivong (r. 1927–1941) and the region’s authorities, the governor-general (*Gouverneur Générale*) and Senior Residents (*Résidents Supérieurs*), Cambodia was governed by local elites and, by one scholar’s description, as a colonial police state.³⁶ As recently as the 1920s, Khmers were largely disconnected from ideas of European democracy, socialism, and the nation-state. But this new generation of Khmer students, including Pol Pot, Yuon, and Nim, was the benefactor of the French policy of cultural coexistence that emerged in the 1930s. Now, the protectorate’s best and brightest students had access to the very French classics that inspired them to challenge their oppressors. Pol Pot, Yuon, and Nim all won admission to Collège Norodom Sihanouk in Kampong Cham, where in 1942 its first class comprised only twenty students.³⁷ Here, Suong Sikœun notes, is where “some of the main Khmer Rouge leaders were trained.”³⁸

French-language education was important in terms of the “semiotics of status” in Cambodia and stood as one of the “building blocks of thought.”³⁹ A French education entailed immersion in French literature. Khmer students “spoke French; they had attended French schools; and they had grown up in a French colony. French was the prism through which they viewed the outside world.”⁴⁰ However, their French teachers’ aim, as then director of primary education M. Humbert-Hesse described, was to “create elites, assistants . . . with a view to a useful collaboration, to help in the moral and intellectual uplifting of the race, to augment its dignity and well-being, and to enrich their country by intelligent and sustained labor.”⁴¹ In training Khmer students in the French arts and classics, then, French educators wished to mold civil servants to preserve French interests and solidify France’s rule over the protectorate.

Despite French teachers’ best efforts, many Khmer students developed strong nationalist sentiments. In an example of perverse incentive, French

efforts to preserve its rule by training Khmer civil servants in French classics actually accelerated nationalist imaginings and collective consciousness in Khmer students.⁴² Reading materials and lessons emphasized thought and achievement in the French Revolution and the pillars of French nationhood (liberty, equality, fraternity). Gradually, these ideas found currency among Khmer students, who began to envision a world without the French and of Cambodia as a nation.

Another example of the irony of the French *mission civilisatrice* was Lycée Sisowath, founded in 1935 by the author of “How to Be a Khmer Civil Servant,” Senior Resident of Cambodia (RSC) Achille Louis Auguste Silvestre. Sisowath students were the first to develop nationalist ideas. The first anticolonial demonstrations occurred just a year after its grand opening in 1936, and Buddhist demonstrations followed in the 1940s (later forming the Democratic Party, Krum Prajādhipeyy). Lycée Sisowath’s significance lies in its bringing together young minds, Yuon and Nim included, giving them “a rare freedom of association and discussion . . . to forge a sense of connection that was far from imagined in its physical immediacy.”⁴³ For instance, before he formed a lasting bond with Pol Pot, Sisowath student and future DK deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs Ieng Sary (1925–2013) spearheaded the Liberation of Cambodia from French Colonialism group.⁴⁴ The bonds that the future Paris Group formed in their *collège* and lycée years would only strengthen in France shortly thereafter. The “comradeship of the classroom,” as it turns out, served the Khmer students “as a microcosm of the emergent nation” rather than as a bastion of an ancien regime.⁴⁵

A driving force behind such comradeship was the centralized French educational system, which taught the entire student body the same curriculum. Khmer students learned history with little adaptation to prevailing conditions. The goal, again, was to develop in colonial subjects an attachment to French history, philosophies, politics, and values. But common experiences as students reading French classics about revolution, romance, and emancipation played their part in inspiring national imaginings.

Several future CPK figures reminisced rather fondly of their French immersion. Pol Pot’s *collège* classmate and future loyalist Khieu Samphan recalled that both were “profoundly influenced by the spirit of French thought—by the Age of Enlightenment, of [Jean-Jacques] Rousseau and Montesquieu.”⁴⁶ Pol Pot, in particular, favored the nineteenth-century French poetry of Victor Hugo, Jean Rimbaud, Paul Verlaine, and Alfred de Vigny, though as Samphan notes, his “favorite” readings were by Jean-Jacques Rousseau.⁴⁷ His future personal secretary, Phouk Chhay (1936–1977), identified as a true intellectual in the French mold. “I consider myself an intellectual because I have read

so much. . . . Most of all I know the great French classics: the writing of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Montesquieu, Chateaubriand, and Emile Zola," he noted in a 1970 interview.⁴⁸ The French legacy remained long after independence, as a generation of lycée students became, at once, Francophone and Francophile.⁴⁹

Immersion in the French classics positioned some Khmer students to develop an appreciation for Marxism. Sisowath student and Ieng Sary's onetime close aide Suong Sikœun reflected on the lasting imprint of his studies on French Revolutionary history. He was "passionate about the 1789 French Revolution" and its tripartite motto "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" (*Liberté, égalité, fraternité*). He "read with enthusiasm" everything about the Revolution, with a "preference for the Jacobins whose chief, Robespierre, was [his] hero and idol."⁵⁰ This was because, as he elaborated further, "Robespierre's personality impressed me. His radicalism influenced me a lot. He was incorruptible and intransigent. . . . If you do something, you must do it right through to the end. You cannot make compromises. That was my personal philosophy, my personal ideology. You must always be on the side of the Absolute—no middle way, no compromise. You must never do things by halves."⁵¹ Sikœun's passion for the Revolution did not waver even after he became a Marxist. French Revolutionary aims of societal transformation, the importance of the role of the masses, and the necessity for popular dictatorship made Marxism and Communism especially palatable years later.⁵²

Not accompanying Sikœun, Yuon, and Nim at Lycée Sisowath was their *collège* companion Pol Pot. He had previously joined his older brother Chhay at the French-language Catholic École Miche (1937–1942) in Phnom Penh but failed an important entrance examination to Lycée Sisowath after his years at Collège Sihanouk (1942–1947) in Kampong Cham. According to one account, his "ingratiating manner," "fondness for sports," and "apparent lack of ambition" barred him from admission.⁵³ Instead, Pol Pot boarded at Russey Keo Technical School just outside Phnom Penh, where he worked alongside underprivileged Cambodians in carpentry and studied as an electrician. He thus missed events in Phnom Penh, where, after World War II, nationalists had impelled King Norodom Sihanouk (r. 1941–1955) to declare independence. Pol Pot's improved grades eventually earned him a scholarship to the French School of Radioelectricity (École Française de radioélectricité) in Paris. A reunion with his Collège Sihanouk comrades was on the horizon. Yuon joined Pol Pot in boarding the SS *Jamaïque* in Saigon, and they embarked on a trip that took between a month and six weeks through the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea. The ship docked in Marseilles in September 1949 and both men rode the overnight train to Paris.⁵⁴

To Paris, 1949–1955

If we apply Benedict Anderson's concept of "pilgrimages" abroad as a defining feature of prenationalist elites to the Khmer students' arrivals in 1949–1950, it is no wonder that Paris, where they pursued advanced degrees, initiated their transformation from nationalist intellectuals into radical ones.⁵⁵ A "precursor of CPK ideology" was that intrepid French-educated Khmer students from the protectorate school system, the very intellectuals who formed the CPK Central Committee in the 1960s, were "among the Khmer youth sent to Paris for their postsecondary education."⁵⁶ Although Pol Pot and Hou Yuon left Cambodia to join dozens of Khmer students in pursuit of advanced degrees, they were acutely aware that their country would never be independent under French or monarchist rule. Upon disembarking in France, though, Pol Pot and Yuon were neither political nor revolutionary. Nevertheless, both men recognized crises in their homeland that required a response from its elites: non-agricultural economic life was an outsider-dominated affair, the French dual-administrative system favored Vietnamese, and dependence on France prevented economic modernization. Decades of French linkages between their subjects in the protectorate (*cambodgiens*) and ancient Khmers had also developed in them a fear of cultural-national annihilation, which pushed some to seek out saving their land through Cambodian nationalist organizations.

The first of these organizations was the Khmer Students' Association (Association des Étudiants Khmères, AEK), founded in 1946 and led by moderate democrats. It brought together students across a whole range of political orientations with a shared goal of achieving national freedom, or at least improving the situation back home.⁵⁷ Members met at the Indochina Pavillion (Pavillon de l'Indochine), University City of Paris (Cité universitaire de Paris), where the AEK published the biannual *Khmer Student* (Bulletin de l'Association des étudiants Khmers, Khemara Nissit; BAEK). Those who took an interest in Cambodian politics supported the left-leaning, pro-independence Democratic Party (Krum Prajādhipeyy), which had won a majority of seats in the Constituent Assembly in 1947. Their political views also tended to reflect an appreciation for republican politician and pro-independence advocate Son Ngoc Thanh (1908–1977). Initially, Pol Pot and Yuon avoided raising eyebrows in Paris for fear of losing their Cambodian government bursaries. At first, they only participated in study sessions. The 1952 dismissal of the Democratic Party government, however, pushed them both, with their future CPK mainstays following suit later, toward activism and, later, membership in radical student associations.⁵⁸

Together with the setting of 1950s Paris and their continued comradeship of association, radical currents of avant-garde thought led the impressionable

Pol Pot and Hou Yuon to warm up to Marxism-Leninism and Communism (their first encounter with either).⁵⁹ Shared experiences and exegetical bonding through the study of Marxist texts in the illuminating city of Paris and against the backdrop of wars in Indochina and Korea—a period Jacques Vergès calls “the springtime of peoples”—galvanized them as awakened agents of change.⁶⁰ Intellectuals in Paris developed common political views and established lasting bonds into the heyday of the Communist movement.

Khmer students met regularly to debate politics, art, philosophy, and their homeland's position in an ever-globalizing world. Once again, the collective consciousness of the Khmer cohort in Paris that the French had fostered through immersive study of the French classics played a central role. Students such as Suong Sikœun regarded Paris as an anti-imperial metropole and meeting ground for the avant-garde:

In the eyes of Cambodian revolutionary intellectuals, France represented the country where the 1789 Revolution broke out and triumphed, and the famous triad Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity was inscribed on its flag. It was the homeland of Enlightenment writers and philosophers Diderot, Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau; of marvelous poets Victor Hugo, Paul Verlaine, Arthur Rimbaud, Charles Baudelaire, Alfred Vigny, Alfred de Musset, Paul Éluard, and Louis Aragon. Paris was also the city where illustrious revolutionary leaders had lived and stayed: Karl Marx, Lenin, Zhou Enlai, Deng Xiaoping, and Ho Chi Minh. But Paris was, above all, the city of the first successful proletarian revolution, the Commune. Paris was closer to us . . . the beautiful, the glorious “Queen of the world” as immortalized in Mistinguett's song reprised by Josephine Baker. For our generation, Paris embodied hope, the future, justice, equality, and human fraternity. The dream for each of us was almost to “see Paris and die.” To leave for France, it was the guarantee of a future assured and the promise of a life out of the ordinary. For any revolutionary, it was the prospect of theoretical and ideological training before the baptism of fire, an indispensable preliminary step before throwing himself into the melee.⁶¹

Which isms young students espoused at this time mattered less than the experiences of their discussions about them, through which they bonded as comrades. Paris hosted a *ménagerie* of progressives, and shared experiences engendered the inception of radical thought. As Pol Pot recalled, “I came into contact with some progressive students. . . . I often stayed with them, and little by little they influenced me.”⁶² Samphan also remembered that as a student in Paris he and “many students of our country . . . debated the future of our

people and ways of realizing our goals such as national independence, economic progress, and prosperity for everybody. Already at that time all my activities had been aimed at the fulfillment of these ideals.”⁶³ Whether through shared experiences of living abroad or interpretations of radical thought within the context of rectifying their homeland’s problems, these men coalesced around doing something and that they could do it together.⁶⁴

The leap from progressive student to card-carrying Communist was by no means a guarantee. Radical transformations of Khmer intellectuals into radicals occurred because of four major pushes: (1) participation in Marxist reading groups wherein Khmer intellectuals read Marxist texts and found utility in their content, (2) networking with Communists in Berlin, (3) corrupt politics at home that crushed the democratic process, and (4) the turn to Maoism as a means to effectuate real political change in Cambodia through revolution.

First was membership in the Marxist Circle (*Cercle Marxiste*), a secret cell within the AEK linked to French Communist Party (PCF)-established language groups (*groupes des langues*, ca. 1949), and which PCF secretary general Maurice Thorez endorsed. A section of the PCF, the Cercle had its own Politburo and Secretariat, though it did not confer with the Vietnamese-led Khmer People’s Revolutionary Party (KPRP) because its members feared harsh reprisal and disliked the Vietnamese students’ parochial Indochina Federation proposal.⁶⁵ Cercle leaders in 1950–1951 were PCF members Rath Samœun (1932–1972) and Ieng Sary, and included recent PCF recruits Hou Yuon, Pol Pot, and later, Khieu Samphan (who arrived in 1953 and subsequently joined). Pol Pot, who held a low rank and briefly left Paris in mid-1950 to work in a “labor battalion” on the Zagreb highway in Yugoslavia, dated the Cercle’s foundation to July–August 1951, though Ieng Sary repudiated this claim.⁶⁶ The Cercle consisted of individual cells and, in a reflection of its parent organization’s own *modus operandi*, demanded strict adherence to clandestine operation. Pol Pot, Yuon, and Sary were in the same cell, which focused on the Communist canon.

Among the Khmer intellectuals’ cohort was Keng Vannsak (1925–2008), a radical thinker and student mentor who had ties to Parisian leftist circles.⁶⁷ He hosted student meetings at his Rue de Commerce (15^{ème} *arrondissement*) apartment to organize antimonarchist nationalist reading groups. Cercle gatherings at his apartment encouraged doctrinaire discussions and reading ideologically tinged materials. At such gatherings, students read and discussed Communist literature, including Lenin’s *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Marx’s *Das Kapital* and *The Communist Manifesto*, Stalin’s collected works, and Mao Zedong’s “On New Democracy” and *Selected Works*. Cercle members read and contemplated these works in French, though they conversed in Khmer as well since some political terms lacked Khmer equivalents.⁶⁸

Over time, the Cercle's outlook changed considerably from a largely elite group of nationalist students to an openly leftist organization. Members such as PCF operative Mey Mann (1920–2001) recalled that the Cercle “secretly controlled the student movement from within” and that the Cercle itself was overseen “by Communist Party members whose . . . membership was kept secret.”⁶⁹ Cambodia's independence in 1953 played its part too, as the search for the best method to oust the French evolved into study sessions to rid postindependence Cambodia of political and social problems. As Cercle participants became suspicious of wealth and money, they turned against members with especially rich class origins. In an August 1952 text written by an AEK member, “money and rank were regarded as potions that poisoned people and subjected them to the monarchy.”⁷⁰

In Cercle gatherings, Marxist ideas initially found currency insofar as they were useful for obtaining independence and not because of their theoretical value or advocacy of proletarian internationalism. Pol Pot, for one, admitted that when he first read “the big, thick works of Marx . . . I did not really understand them at all,” although he found Stalin's “Marxism and the National Question” (1912) and *History of the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of the USSR* (1935) much more palatable.⁷¹ Pol Pot, of course, abandoned his studies for politics in 1951, whereas his Cercle comrade Ieng Sary devoted himself to close reading Stalin's works and techniques for organizational structures of the Communist Party. Other Cercle members felt the same about Marx's works. Ping Say, who also liaised with Pol Pot upon his return to Cambodia in 1953, regarded Marx as “too deep for us,” though Ieng Sary understood enough of Marxist categories to achieve entry into the PCF Cadre School. Such examples throw valuable light on Cercle members' appreciation of Marxism as “an ideal” rather than an ideological canon. They regarded themselves less as “avatars of a proletarian society” and more as “incarnation[s] of good that would triumph over the forces of evil.”⁷²

Instead, Cercle participants interpreted Marxism through the lens of national culture, a “normative form” of Khmer Buddhism. Although the CPK later banned Buddhism and defrocked monks, in their Paris years as before, Buddhism was inseparable from Cambodian identity.⁷³ Early Cercle leaders “emerged from a background that naturally stressed the importance of self-control and renunciation in achieving a purely religious conception of liberation, while some members [of the Cercle] were already experimenting with parallel ideas and practices.”⁷⁴ The Cercle's host, Keng Vannsak, “embraced an obscure quasi-Buddhist doctrine called ascetology [*ascétologie*], founded by a paralyzed French academic, Dr. Gorelle, in the belief that it would help him control his sexual desires at a time when the struggle for independence was

paramount.”⁷⁵ Vannsak’s mentee, Pol Pot, wrote his first political piece in 1952, an article for *Khmer Student* that deferred to Buddhist moralistic grounds in arguing for democratic reform in Cambodia. Although not overtly Marxist in content, its main argument reflects the Cercle’s prevailing leftist stance. It called on Sihanouk to follow Buddha’s example of dispossessing himself of his riches and lavish lifestyle to represent his people fairly and earnestly. A democratic regime, he concluded, was the only way to reestablish public trust and adhere to Buddhist moralism.⁷⁶ Thus, through reading leftist texts and by interpreting them through a local cultural lens, Cercle members began to conceptualize a Marxism that fit with concrete historical realities back home.⁷⁷

Second, in July and August 1951 Pol Pot, Yuon, and Sary led a ten-member AEK representative youth delegation to the International Federation of Democratic Youth festival in East Berlin. One of their instructions before arrival was to bring the red flag of the KPRP.⁷⁸ The festival was their first direct exposure to figures involved with the KPRP resistance against the French, and once there, they met Viet Minh delegates who gave them “a number of Communist documents.”⁷⁹ They returned from the East Berlin festival with brochures, photographs of KPRP founder Son Ngoc Minh, and “a sample of the Issarak five-towered flag.”⁸⁰ By their return, Vannsak had left Paris, but his departure initiated even deeper bonds among Pol Pot, Yuon, and Ieng Sary, as the Cercle relocated to Sary’s hotel room on Rue St. André des Arts in 1952.⁸¹

By early autumn of that year, Hou Yuon had ascended to AEK leadership and connected it to the internationalist National Union of Students of France (Union National des Étudiants de France). His rise signaled the Cercle’s seizure of the AEK from within (a bloc within strategy, so to speak), as PCF members split the AEK into moderate, right-wing, and leftist camps.⁸² This fracture also led the AEK to augment its leftist political orientation. Members distributed issues of *Humanity* (*L’Humanité*), frequented PCF cells, and expressed loud criticisms of AEK honorary president Norodom Sihanouk. In one instance, AEK members decried Sihanouk’s suppression of opposition parties and demanded that he renounce his honorary title as AEK president. Sihanouk’s continued disruption of the electoral process before and after independence from France ultimately pushed the Cercle toward embracing Communism as its guiding principle.⁸³

Three major political developments on the home front constitute the third major push of the Paris Group toward Communism. Sihanouk dissolved the National Assembly in January 1949 and ruled by imperial decree, angering the Democratic Party, which had lobbied for a popular vote.⁸⁴ The assassination of Democratic Party leader Ieu Kœuss (1905–1950), possibly by an associate

of Sihanouk's uncle, Norodom Norindeth, left the Democratic Party without its leader and student supporters with few political options.⁸⁵ The Democratic Party continued its push for elections, which it gained in 1951, and anti-Sihanouk demonstrations in May 1952 among students in Cambodia gave indications that the monarchy could no longer ignore calls for reform. From Paris, Hou Yuon penned a letter in which he lauded the demonstrators' efforts and situated their protests in a global context: "These positive developments have become normal throughout the world, whether in the European countries or the Asian ones," he averred, "and especially in the countries where independence is being sought."⁸⁶

The next development was the French position on Sihanouk, which cast him as the only hope for political stability and infuriated the pro-democracy Khmer students in Paris. As the French military commander General Pierre de Langlade declared, "Democracy had no hope [here]. . . . The parliamentary experiment has failed. . . . The Sovereign remains the only person capable of giving Cambodia political direction. . . . [He is] heir to the . . . mystique of the God-Kings, who for thousands of years have guided the destinies of the land. . . . Everything in this country has to be done by the King."⁸⁷ Sihanouk had unchecked power and again dissolved the assembly on 15 June 1952 in a coup d'état. Sihanouk's seizure of power propelled the Paris-based Cambodian intellectuals toward embracing the PCF's Stalinism, dogmatism, and emphasis on clandestine operation and organization.

The Cercle members were far from passive in their response to Sihanouk's coup. Keng Vannsak, in particular, levied harsh condemnation in a 1952 issue of the AEK publication *Khmer Student*, in which he declared that

we, Khmer students of the AEK, consider that Your Majesty has acted illegally . . . and that the policy of the Throne . . . will inevitably lead our Khmer Motherland into an abyss of perpetual slavery. . . . In your message to the nation, [you said that] Cambodia faces ever greater dangers. . . . What should the people think when Your Majesty's Palace has become a lobby for dishonest dealings which place within your hands the riches of the country and the people? . . . Corruption in our country stems from the Throne and spreads down to the humblest officials. The French oppress the whole country, the King trades his Crown, the Palace and its parasites suck the people's blood. . . . These are the main causes of our country's critical situation today. . . . Your Majesty has sought to divide the nation in two: the royalists, and those who struggle for independence. [Your] policy is to set Khmers against Khmers.⁸⁸

However, Cercle members realized that their two years of reading radical texts and publishing *Khmer Student* in Paris had not brought them closer to reform. After Sihanouk disbanded the AEK in 1953, the students took a radical turn, forming the pro-PCF Khmer Students Union (UEK) on 26 November 1953.⁸⁹ As Khieu Samphan, who assumed leadership of the UEK in 1957 and linked it to the KPRP's Phnom Penh branch, recalled, "My studies as well as my experiences convinced me that the only way of implementing our ideals . . . and of building up our backward agriculture in particular, is socialism. Thus, I became a communist. I did so out of objective conviction and not out of daydreaming."⁹⁰

Sihanouk's dissolution of the Democratic Party-led assembly in June 1952 further exacerbated the Cercle's radicalization, with even more students flocking en masse to join the PCF. The French Communists' appeal owed to General Secretary Maurice Thorez, a charismatic orator with a personality cult of his own. But in 1950 Thorez suffered a stroke and left the country for medical treatment. An intraparty struggle for power culminated in purges, and many Khmers in France, including Pol Pot, were swept along by a Stalinist wave as the PCF's rigid disciplinarian line instilled in members a sense of purpose and direction. Pol Pot and Hou Yuon thus learned the effectiveness of staying out of sight and mind, especially with the Cambodian government's crackdown on scholarship student involvement in leftist activities. In 1952, Pol Pot, Yuon, and Sary "vowed a lifelong commitment" to Communism.⁹¹

The final push was the process whereby the Khmer intellectuals in Paris turned from the PCF's Stalinism to Maoism, which contained three principal drivers: (1) opposition to the idea that reform in Cambodia was possible through elections, (2) aversion to Vietnamese leadership of the liberation movement, and (3) disapproval of Soviet and Vietnamese support for Sihanouk. The turn to Maoism, a reaction against an international Communist movement that was uninterested in Cambodia's national liberation, recalls Mao's own gradual disillusionment with the Soviets when he and other high-ranking CCP figures realized that Moscow was more than willing to sacrifice Chinese interests if it suited the Soviet Union.

The Maoist turn also occurred because of a disparity of opinions on how to change Cambodia now that it was an independent country in late 1953. The PCF's pro-Soviet line echoed Moscow's view that Cambodians ought to support Sihanouk, whose noninterference with the Ho Chi Minh Trail was a necessary part of Vietnamese military strategy in the war against imperialism. As Keng Vannsak stated in an interview, "We wanted to take power and believed that we could do so only with popular support, which necessarily means violence. We opposed the PCF's view that we could come to power through uni-

versal suffrage.”⁹² Pol Pot had returned to Cambodia in early 1953 to take up a regional cell secretary position in the Vietnamese-directed KPRP, yet frustration mounted among cadres who tolerated rather than embraced Hanoi’s leadership over the Cambodian Working Bureau in eastern Cambodia, and awaited Vietnamese directives on what to do next.⁹³

In Paris, the PCF discarded Stalinism. Its members had become alienated by Soviet revisionism and were swept up in the tide of decolonization in France’s former colonies. Cambodian radicals had also tired of Russian and Vietnamese support of Sihanouk. As Vannsak, who had returned to Paris, elaborates, “At the beginning, we were very Stalinist. . . . We turned toward China in the late 1950s because the Russians were playing the Sihanouk card and neglecting us. . . . *When everyone began to criticize Stalin, we became Maoists.*”⁹⁴ Soviet de-Stalinization and “revisionism” also propelled many radical students in Paris toward looking to China for answers to crises in Cambodia. Maoism provided an alternative: it was borne from the Chinese revolutionary experience; it stressed practice over dogmatism and the ongoing fight against contradictions even after liberation; it discarded the Eurocentrism that was inherent in Marxism-Leninism; and Maoism as an ideological system contained emancipatory features that were ideal fits for addressing Cambodian socioeconomic ills, especially in the rural sector.

For the Cercle, Marxism’s “liberating possibility” only became a reality when “rephrased in a national voice.”⁹⁵ Vannsak’s recollection that the Cercle “became Maoists” as a reaction to Soviet neglect captures the mounting frustrations that Khmer radicals felt about politics in their homeland. The 1953 independence had simply not ushered in the kind of political and economic change for Cambodia that they envisioned. No longer under colonial subjugation, Khmer leftists now had to apply the radical ideas with which they had wrestled to ongoing systemic problems in post-independence Cambodian politics and society. In Paris, Hou Yuon, Khieu Samphan (arrived in 1953), and Hu Nim (arrived in 1955) turned to Maoism to counter Sihanouk’s anti-democratic turn and because they found value in Maoist political economy. Yuon and Samphan pursued doctorates with a view to taking the political route to reforming Cambodia with Maoism as their critical interpretive paradigm to understanding its plight. Nim joined them before returning to Phnom Penh to complete his own Maoist-informed dissertation.⁹⁶ These works represent the beginning of the Cambodian intellectuals’ Maoist vision and became the foundation on which the CPK built DK.

The First Foundational National Text: Pol Pot's "Monarchy or Democracy?"

This section uses Pol Pot's first political writing to highlight one of three important developments that pair neatly with likewise stages in Mao's life. It provides a genealogical textual road map through the Paris Group's ideological maturation. Pol Pot's first-ever essay on politics, "Monarchy or Democracy?," stands as a hallmark example of the Cambodian intellectuals' preradical thought and mirrors Mao's 1919 "Great Union of the Popular Masses" in its stress on popular political engagement. Far from the "nationalism painted red" that the Paris Group held aloft during the mid-1950s, it reveals the inextricable link between man and nation in their vision.

Upon his 1949 arrival in Paris, Pol Pot was not yet the millenarian Communist he became later in his career. His 1953 departure from France also meant that he was long gone by the time Hou Yuon and Hu Nim finished their doctoral dissertations on Cambodia's socioeconomic problems in 1955 and 1965, respectively. But before Pol Pot left France, he wrote "Monarchy or Democracy?," which the AEK included in a mid-August 1952 issue of *Khmer Student*. Pol Pot wrote the article by hand—no Khmer typewriter existed until Vannsak's invention later that year—under the pseudonym "Original Khmer" (*Khmer Toem*, discussed above), a name that betrays a "racial-historical preoccupation" that traces its origins to the French construct of the Cambodian past.⁹⁷ It also reflects the notion of "Original Culture," which Pol Pot tried to implement in DK, and which originated in his mentor's thesis on restoring Khmer cultural purity.⁹⁸

Although Pol Pot's "Monarchy or Democracy?" differs from Mao's 1919 essay, it shares similar pre-Marxist ideological leanings, which for Pol Pot were Buddhism and democracy. His piece is indicative of the democratic, preradical viewpoint of the Paris Group of intellectuals in its call for drastic political reform and greater safeguarding of the democratic process against corruption. There is indeed a parallel role in the reception of traveling theory in Pol Pot's "Monarchy or Democracy?" and Mao's "Great Union of the Popular Masses." As Mao urged collective action against the dominant aristocracy and landowning elite for a more prosperous nation, so too did Pol Pot, who criticized Sihanouk for his self-interested reforms. Pol Pot's article also mirrors Mao's 1940 essay "On New Democracy" in its production of a new idea by rendering a foreign concept (democracy) congruent with a local one (Buddhism). For him, this new idea contained inherent democratic elements in the life of the Buddha and in Cambodian exemplars such as Prince Sisowath Youthevong (1913–1947).

Three components are important to understanding Pol Pot's proposals to reframe and reconceptualize Cambodia and Khmer political culture: (1) the relation between his immersion in French classics and current status as a student in Paris; (2) his use of Buddhism to criticize Cambodian politics; and (3) his synthesis of foreign and endogenous ideas to propose novel solutions to Cambodian political problems.

First, the French Revolution and lessons of liberty, equality, and fraternity that Pol Pot had learned when he was a student in Cambodia influenced his thinking at the time. Initially an apolitical student like many of his comrades, he developed an antimonarchist viewpoint, especially within the AEK. Many AEK members' political views "mingled hero worship for Son Ngoc Thanh," a Cambodian republican politician with "vague hopes for Cambodia's independence."⁹⁹ This viewpoint intensified with Sihanouk's coup d'état in 1952, as the AEK membership grew frustrated with the king's autocratic move to quell the AEK-backed Democratic Party.

History shows us that only democratic rights and assembly can grant some breath of freedom to the Khmer people. . . . When there is no assembly, the country will be immediately bound up. . . . [Sihanouk's] 15 June [1952] coup d'état shows us that we are not at all under the rule of a constitutional monarchy, but under a regime of absolute monarchy. The King is absolute, he seeks to destroy the interests of the people when the latter is in a position of weakness, and he is worried to see that the more a people is educated, the more easily they are exposed to the faults of kings. The absolute king uses good words, but his heart is mean; he uses demagoguery to deceive the people.¹⁰⁰

Indeed, Pol Pot's article betrays "Thanhist-Democrat" influences, the strident attack against royalty above just the first salvo. He proceeds with a premonition that students will rise up against the monarch: "Royal edicts will not affect the solidarity of students, which is growing daily." "Democracy," Pol Pot averred, was the growing trend; it was "as precious as a diamond and cannot be compared to any other form of government."¹⁰¹ Monarchy, by contrast, was a "*doctrine injuste*," as "infected as a putrid wound," and a system that "humanity must abolish . . . an absolute doctrine that exists only because of nepotism."¹⁰²

Next, Pol Pot's diatribe turns to Cambodian kings, who he argues deceived the people through charismatic means and "lower[ed] the people's standards of living to that of an animal; the people are kept as soldiers [*bal*] or a herd of slaves [*khñumge*], made to work night and day to feed the king and his *seraglio* of courtesans."¹⁰³ Sihanouk is the main target of Pol Pot's criticism for his role

as a French lackey who was not fulfilling his duties as a divine universal ruler and earthly manifestation of a living god to protect the Khmer people from harm. A noted Francophile, Sihanouk “played all sides when it came to language and culture, entering the monkhood, abdicating, and playing the Buddhist card when it suited him.”¹⁰⁴ He draws particular criticisms for mortgaging Buddhism’s respected position in Khmer society through the introduction of ranks to the *Sangha*. Because Sihanouk had become a friend to imperialism and the enemy instead of the protector of the people, religion, and knowledge, the only moral solution was to espouse a democratic system with strong Cambodian Buddhist moral overtones.

Pol Pot also lambastes the monarchy as “the enemy of religion” because it sought to exploit the people, with only monks “truly understanding the real nature of monarchy and finding means to explain to the people that they should not obey it.”¹⁰⁵ His reference is to centuries-long Buddhist activism in Khmer history. For instance, under French rule, a monk teacher of Pali at the Buddhist Institute, Achar Hem Chieu, “called on all the monks to boycott Romanization of the Khmer script [into a Khmer *quoc ngu*] and the introduction of the Gregorian calendar . . . condemned the French administration as arbitrary and dictatorial and asked the soldiers if they would serve Cambodia or the foreign masters, and denounced the abuse of power by our self-styled French protectors who are themselves today under Japanese domination.” The 20 July 1942 “Umbrella Demonstration,” a major protest led by monks, was also an important check on power and central to the emergent Cambodian nationalist movement.¹⁰⁶

Third, Pol Pot’s views on Buddhism and French revolutionary antimonarchism constitute his clarion call for democracy, which intriguingly, albeit in a different context, shares parallels with Mao’s characterization of the peasant movement in Hunan. Pol Pot references Buddhism and the French Revolution, among other struggles against corruption, to place the democratic movement in Cambodia alongside some of the world’s great revolutions, as Mao had done in a 1919 essay.¹⁰⁷ The Robespierre and Danton-led French Revolution is Pol Pot’s main historical reference, which reveals that his French education in the classics was not yet passé in his thinking. He praises the French revolutionaries for ending the monarchy and executing the monarch, King Louis XVI, though he stops short of calling for the same punishment for Sihanouk.¹⁰⁸

In place of monarchy, democracy was the only worthy political system. Pol Pot augured that democracy was a rising tide across the world: “the peoples of all countries are adopting it. . . . [It] is like an unstoppable river down the mountain slopes.” The names Lenin and Stalin (as “Lenine” and “Staline”) also appear as “guides” of the 1917 Russian Revolution, which Pol Pot lauds for

"abolishing the monarchy fully." Pol Pot also identifies the Chinese revolution and subsequent ousting and elimination of the Qing royal family's hold on political power in China as another historical precedent for the democracy movement in Cambodia. Pol Pot contends further that his homeland ought to embrace democracy on moral grounds, with Buddha and former Khmer prince Sisowath Youthevong, who "abandon[ed] the monarchists to inculcate democracy for the Khmer people," as historical precedents.¹⁰⁹

Intriguingly, Pol Pot positions himself as the mouthpiece of an authentically Khmer perspective, with Buddhism as the lens through which to view his country's moral and political decay and past history as the material to situate democracy in Khmer political culture.¹¹⁰ He highlights moralistic grounds for his case for democratic reform, noting that the "Great Master Buddha" (Prah Buddparamagrū) "abandoned the monarchy to become a friend of the people." He also notes that a democratic regime is the only way to "restore Buddhist moralism because our great leader Buddha was the first to have taught [democracy]." Indeed, Buddha was by his appraisal "very well informed; he soon discovered that his father [Suddhodana] was enriching himself unjustly, leaving the people languishing in ignorance, sickness, famine, and homelessness, and without schools or hospitals. Buddha decided to abandon the monarchy to become a friend of man and the people by teaching men to love each other." The Buddha's devotion to democracy, he notes, is clear evidence that a democratic regime was the correct political path for his homeland, and in turn, it constituted the "only regime that could safeguard Buddhism's profound values."¹¹¹

Culture bearers and those most responsible for the protection of Buddhism were monks, whom Pol Pot highlights as maintaining close ties to Sihanouk (who granted the *Sangha* patronage). Buddhist monks' continued role within Khmer political culture as recipients of the king's patronage and legitimators of his divine rule as a god-king (*devarāja*) gave them a deep understanding of the Janus-faced nature of Khmer monarchical rule. But in 1952, the French still controlled the *Sangha* through the Buddhist Institute and forbade monks from study in Bangkok. The Hem Chieu-led demonstration and a modernizing monkhood may have signaled how monks would figure into establishing democracy in Cambodia, though importantly, neither the demonstration nor the monkhood subscribed to leftist theories.¹¹²

Nevertheless, Pol Pot charges that Sihanouk's circumvention of a mounting democratic process and the will of the Khmer people in favor of an overt autocratic power grab signaled that "politics as usual" was in need of a total revamp. He criticized Sihanouk's alleged skewing of the Buddhist community toward his consolidation and, worst of all, branded Sihanouk as a French

minion for his role in overseeing this situation in Cambodia. Pol Pot concludes by expressing his conviction that true independence was impossible so long as Sihanouk's politics and reliance on France to legitimize his position remained. Otherwise, Cambodia would remain subservient until the democratic tide comes in to overtake it.¹¹³

Conclusion

Pol Pot's first political writing represents a hallmark example of the Paris-based Cambodian intellectuals' position at the time—antimonarchist, deeply nationalist, and holding Buddhism as inseparable from national identity. He, like his cohort, eventually took his antimonarchist fervor to a higher level upon realizing the limitations of promoting change in Phnom Penh from privileged settings in Paris. After joining the PCF, the Khmer intellectuals came to recognize that “collective work on a unified basis” required politicized peasants to function.¹¹⁴ Pol Pot thus returned to Cambodia to do just that, as he worked as a covert operative within the KPRP while working simultaneously as a schoolteacher. His contemporaries, however, were still interested in changing the system from within as administrators in Sihanouk's government. At this stage, Hou Yuon and later Hu Nim were unwilling to return to Cambodia and take up arms against Sihanouk. But they were Marxist-Leninists by 1953 (1955 for Hu Nim, who arrived in Paris two years after Pol Pot's departure), and they believed that the only solution to Cambodia's political problems lay not solely in domestic affairs but in foreign ones as well. It is to their doctoral dissertations, which diagnosed systemic problems brought on by Cambodia's insertion into a highly exploitative global capitalist market, that we now turn.

CHAPTER 4

Integrating Truth with Concrete Practice

Intellectual Adaptations of Maoism, 1955–1965

[An] intellectual is an individual with a specific public role in society that cannot be reduced simply to being a faceless professional, a competent member of a class just going about [their] business. . . . [They are] endowed with a faculty for representing, embodying, articulating a message, a view, an attitude, philosophy or opinion to, as well as for, a public. And this role has an edge to it, and cannot be played without a sense of being someone whose place it is publicly to raise embarrassing questions, to confront orthodoxy and dogma (rather than to produce them), to be someone who cannot easily be co-opted by governments or corporations, and whose *raison d'être* is to represent all those people and issues that are routinely forgotten or swept under the rug.

—Edward Said, *Representations of the Intellectual*, 1993

In 2004, former chairman of the DK State Presidium Khieu Samphan, a man now sentenced to life imprisonment for genocide and crimes against humanity, claimed that he and fellow Paris-educated CPK ministers Hou Yuon and Hu Nim were “mere figureheads.” He and his companions, he claimed, played no serious roles within the party and “did not have any strength.” “Our names are just those of who had no role in the direction of the movement, and likewise in its decisions, such as the forced evacuation of major centers, the abolition of money, and collectivization of the country,” he urged.¹ Several scholars have hinted at the opposite, but there exists no study of the efforts of future CPK figures to engage with Maoism and the connection of such intellectual engagements to the very CPK policies that Samphan listed in his denial.

A close textual exegesis of writings by Yuon and Nim reveals that they were, in fact, the theoretical architects of a Maoist vision that became DK. This chapter focuses on their written engagement with Marxist and Maoist works to

frame solutions to Cambodia's underdevelopment. Discussions of problems in Cambodia's rural sector were "never entirely academic" until the 1950s.² But economics dissertations by Yuon and Nim represent "perhaps the most detailed and penetrating analysis of the Kampuchean rural socio-economic structure available" and the only extensive scholarly examination of the Cambodian economic structure by Cambodians themselves.³ Alongside Pol Pot's 1952 essay, dissertations by Yuon and Nim represent foundational national texts of Maoist Cambodia in their discussion of myriad problems in the rural sector and use of Maoist vocabulary, syntax, and socioeconomic analyses. Although not revolutionary manuals per se, the dissertations engage with Maoist concepts, betray a fascination with collective work and peasant mobilization, and propose Maoist-inspired solutions that speak to Cambodian realities.⁴

Indeed, one can track the development of Cambodian Maoism from Yuon's engagement with Maoist theory to Nim's expansion upon his predecessor's work with updated Maoist-influenced proposals, then to Pol Pot's mid-1960s faith Maoism. But to date, no English-language scholarship has used these texts to track the Paris Group's ideological transformation.⁵ Pol Pot, explored in chapter 2, had built on operational tactics from his time with the Vietnamese Communists (who themselves had drawn heavily from Maoism).⁶ Taken together, these writings represent the intellectual adaptation phase of the expanded traveling theory model, as ideas with which the Paris Group engaged became critical interpretive paradigms to understand their society and apply creatively on paper.

The dissertations differ in terms of their sources, inspirations for their proposals, and conclusions. Yuon's work places primacy on organization, mobilization, autarky, and Cambodia's specific characteristics (most notably the stark urban-rural divide). His work bears a striking resemblance to the Maoism that antedated the Great Leap Forward. Although not categorically Maoist in the fullest sense, it reflects Mao's investigations into the conditions of rural China. Mao used his "Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society" (1926) to examine societal problems there, from which he produced highly detailed rural investigations (the longest of which is his 1930 investigation of Xingguo County). Although highly readable and novel in its grand vision, Yuon's dissertation ultimately failed when he put his ideas into practice. His study was nevertheless a benchmark for his fellow Paris-based Cambodian comrades who, like him, pursued advanced degrees.

Hu Nim, his onetime mentee, wrote a dissertation of his own ten years later that contains a similar, albeit expanded upon, Maoist class analysis. From the results of Nim's investigation, his study draws on the Chinese experience and

proposes a set of solutions (cooperatives and self-reliance, among others). He quotes Maoist sources unequivocally, levies praise for China's Little Leap, and lauds North Korea's self-reliance program. Nim's work also praises Communist leadership, in particular, and advocates for Cambodian leaders to consider alternative pathways to reframing Cambodian society. His analysis of the Cambodian economy is especially critical, with particular condemnation for the concentration of agricultural wealth among rich farmers. Though his curiosity about China and Mao drove him to visit Beijing in October 1965, he side-steps calling for an antigovernment mass movement in the Chinese mold. As Yuon advocated before him, Nim insists on reforming Cambodia's political system, but with a more democratic, intellectually curious approach that values socialist models and radical land redistribution.

Obvious parallels exist between rural China and Cambodia, but the areas where Mao operated were markedly different structurally and socioeconomically. Mao's investigations set him apart from his contemporaries because he used empirics from his investigations to inform his theory. Mao went into rural areas, examined society firsthand, compiled extensive reports, and then formulated policy. So, too, did Yuon and Nim, though they relied instead on annual reports and government records. Maoist class analyses framed by Yuon and Nim show most vividly the continuity between the exhaustive studies, however flawed, of these leading Paris-trained leftists of the 1950s and 1960s and later CPK analysis and programs. Their mutual emphases on state-directed autonomous development, expanding industry for agricultural advancement, and ending semifeudalism and semicolonialism reflect clear borrowings from Mao's "On New Democracy" (1940). Each work also captures the trace on the future CPK ministers' prerevolutionary radical thinking, from preradical nationalist to Marxist and Maoist writings and economic analyses (Yuon) to the more pro-China revolutionary bend of the Cultural Revolution (Nim).⁷

Hou Yuon (no alias, 1930–1975/76)

A PCF cell member and mentor to Cambodian students in Paris, Hou Yuon was an influential Marxist political analyst, leftist teacher, and politician. He was the unanimous choice to lead the Paris-based AEK and its successor, the UEK. After his studies, Yuon translated his popularity into a political career, which, alongside his writings, formed a nascent part of DK's intellectual framing.⁸ By the early 1960s he was an influential figure in leftist intellectual circles in Cambodia, alongside fellow future CPK stalwarts Hu Nim and Phouk Chhay.⁹ Yuon also worked as a schoolteacher at Phnom Penh's Lycée

Kambuboth, which he developed into a “center of radicalism” as its director and “best-known leader.”¹⁰ He was simultaneously a leader in the AAKC before its dissolution by royal order in 1967.¹¹

Yvon’s willingness to work with Sihanouk’s Popular Socialist Community (Sangam Rāstr Niyam; PSC) changed that year after the outbreak of the Samlaut Rebellion, a series of peasant uprisings in reaction to exploitative and heavy-handed PSC policies that began in Samlaut subdistrict, Battambang. Yvon fled to join the *maquis* (Cambodian Communist guerrillas), after which he was instrumental in garnering support for the CPK and helped conceptualize some of its early policies. He became minister of the interior, cooperatives, and communal reforms of the Royal Government of the National Union of Kampuchea (GRUNK), an important yet ceremonial role (see figure 4.1).¹² He served through the 1975 takeover until his mysterious death in 1975 or 1976, though the Central Committee posthumously deemed him “rehabilitated” in 1978.¹³

An anonymous member of Hou Yvon’s Paris cohort once stated in an interview that if Pol Pot had followed Yvon instead of ordering his execution, then “it would not have been like this. . . . Yvon allowed the use of money; he opposed the evacuation; and he only wanted to have exchange labor groups and not to have cooperatives in the countryside.”¹⁴ To date, however, scholars



FIGURE 4.1. Hou Yvon, CPK minister of interior, rural reform, and cooperatives, in 1974. Hou Yvon was a leading figure among the Cambodian students in Paris, and he served as a mentor to future CPK leading figures Khieu Samphan and Hu Nim. He was killed by his own party in 1975. Photograph courtesy of the Documentation Center of Cambodia, Phnom Penh.

have largely dismissed Yuon's role in the formation of Cambodian Maoism and for laying the groundwork for DK. One position holds that he and other Cambodian intellectuals played no significant role, and that his popularity was merely a recruitment tool for Pol Pot. Another regards him as a principal leader, but outside the CPK policymaking inner circle because of his 1975 execution. One account challenges the Paris Group's role because they were not on the front lines, which made them suspect and unworthy of Vietnamese trust.¹⁵

On Yuon's 1955 dissertation, Philip Short contends that it "would be wrong [to see in it] a blueprint for the economic system that the Khmers Rouges introduced in Cambodia in 1975." But he admits that "many of the key concepts of the Khmer Rouge experiment . . . can be traced back to the discussions that took place at that time."¹⁶ If we consider how influential Yuon's work was on his mentees (his dissertation is listed in the bibliographies of Khieu Samphan's 1959 and Hu Nim's 1965 dissertations), then it is plausible to regard his work as essential to the larger conversation on Cambodian Maoism.

Indeed, Yuon's immediate protégé, Samphan, expanded on his mentor's study in an overall view of Cambodia's national production with his suggestion for a temporary commitment to autarkical development to resuscitate light industry and handicrafts in Cambodia. Samphan's work, alongside Hu Nim's dissertation, reflects Yuon's lasting imprint on the Cambodian Communist movement: once in power, the CPK committed the country to engaging selectively with foreign powers on its own terms and trading directly and indirectly in accordance with the nonaligned movement's pledge of developing socialism autonomously. Yuon's earlier work is therefore fundamental to uncovering the origins of the Cambodian Communist vision in general, and its Maoist roots in particular.

Of the members of his troupe, Yuon had the best understanding of Marxism. He diagnosed systemic problems in rural-urban and local-global relations and contributed significantly to the CPK's orientation as a Marxist-Leninist party. Although the CPK later pursued policies of Third Worldism, import substitution (exporting rice to China to accumulate surplus capital to modernize industry), and abolishing currency, Yuon's analysis of Cambodian peasant issues through a Maoist critical lens informed some of Pol Pot's most notorious policies between 1975 and 1979. Yuon's distorted view of some of Cambodia's socioeconomic realities was at the root of Cambodia's Communist regime.

Pol Pot later espoused, rather enthusiastically, several of Yuon's proposals, implemented them in liberated zones after 1973, and expanded on them after 1975. But Yuon's take on existing ideas did not strike a chord with Pol Pot because they were original or particularly innovative. Because Yuon applied

them to Cambodia's historical situation in a relatable way—as Mao had done with the Sinification of Marxism-Leninism—such proposals resonated most effectively. Yuon's failure to implement his ideas in practice led Pol Pot to conjure his violent approach to agrarian collectivization, which arguably resulted from, and was a logical next step of, Yuon's ideas on the topic.

Countryside Surrounds the Cities: Hou Yuon's Doctoral Dissertation

Hou Yuon's intellectual adaptation forms part of the larger Cambodian Communist sounding board and reveals his lasting imprint on DK's most sinister architects. If Pol Pot's 1952 writing was a Cambodian version of Mao's "Great Union of the Popular Masses," Yuon's dissertation likewise represents a Cambodian equivalent of Mao's rural investigations. In particular, its dual emphasis on peasant emancipation and collective work bears a striking resemblance to Mao's findings on peasant structure in his 1930 survey of a county in Xingguo.¹⁷ An exhaustive analysis of the various classes' receptivity to the CCP land reform, the Xingguo investigation built on Mao's earlier one in Xunwu, and paired with his other rural investigations elsewhere, it underscores Mao's May 1930 adage "No investigation, no right to speak." A close reading of Yuon's dissertation and subsequent book *The Cooperative Question* (*Pañhā Sahakar(n)*) describes an exploited agricultural proletariat (*prolétariat agricole*). Yuon's dissertation calls for altering Cambodia's course without the erasure of the existing political system. His "accommodationist stance" and "ideological alignment with Sihanouk's anti-imperialist platform" only supported class conflict insofar as it did not compromise national unity.¹⁸

Hou Yuon defended his dissertation at the Université de Paris on 14 February 1955, with Faculty of Law professor Pierre Fromont (1894–1959) presiding. Yuon's work came out when China had followed Moscow's prioritization of heavy industry, which influenced him to regard the Soviet Second Five Year Plan's "respon[se] to peasant needs . . . by studying the possibility of, encouraging, or creating Machine Tractor Stations."¹⁹ Yuon draws from a variety of sources, such as area specialists Jean Chesneaux, Jean Ajalbert, and Paul Sebac and Cambodian leftist academic Phung Ton. His approach was also informed by economists (Paul Bernard, Adhémar Leclère, and René Morizon), agronomists (Yves Henry and René Dumont), and dependency (core-periphery) theories of the 1950s. Yuon's work notably characterizes peasants not unlike Marx did in his "Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" (1852), wherein

peasant families in networks of smallholdings constituted a department, like “potatoes in a sack form a sack of potatoes.”²⁰

Yuong’s thesis argues for reorienting Cambodia’s economy around “semi-social types of agricultural production cooperatives” designed to ameliorate peasant living and working standards.²¹ His proposals provide a telling example of his engagement with a foreign ideological discourse at the time, and his assessment of the status of the various classes in semicolonial, semifeudal Cambodia leads to his conclusion that the peasantry is integral to national welfare. It also reveals his Maoist approach to creative adaptation, as his engagement with Marxist concepts is always with a view toward addressing Cambodian realities in their implementation. Yuong’s dissertation ultimately highlights his espousal of the Maoist canon’s earliest emphases: an agrarian policy inspired by the CCP one in the early 1950s, although a Maoist path of rural collectivization was not yet there; useful ways to triumph over seasonal limitations (especially in Asian nations) with mobilization as a powerful variable; and emphases on emancipation, collective work, struggle against exploitation, and agricultural reform.

In this vein, five central themes in Yuong’s work engage with Marxist and Maoist concepts applied creatively to fit the Cambodian historical situation: (1) the nature of Cambodia’s rural-urban divide and the socioeconomic inequality that consumerism and foreign dependency had wrought as a result; (2) state-supported (as the state represents majority rather than minority interests) autonomous development whereby peasants could organize economic productivity themselves; (3) an analysis of Cambodia’s rural classes and importance of peasant voluntarism; (4) peasant organizations in the form of “mutual aid teams,” but without the ultimate goal of state upheaval; and (5) the modernization of Cambodia’s productive forces and freeing peasants from usury and capitalist exploitation. Before investigating the first of these themes, something must be said of the agrarian question before Yuong related it to Cambodia’s rural-urban dichotomy.

The Agrarian Question in Cambodia

Marx and Engels related the agrarian question to conditions in late nineteenth-century Russia at a time when the debate was over whether peasants constituted a reactionary force that might impede the achievement of socialism. Marx argued that industrial workers’ collective action would initiate a self-realization of the need for revolutionary change. The proletariat was the key to overcoming capitalism because only the alienated industrial workers would

recognize their exploitation and effect change through collective action. He held little hope that the peasants could self-realize their exploitation and be allies, though he was receptive to working across classes in a worker-peasant alliance. In his studies of events in Russia, Marx shed light for many, Yuon included, on how Marxism could take shape in nations that lacked a significant industrial proletariat.

Although scholarship is inconclusive on Marx's hope for early Russian collective farms, he opposed any notion of the vanguard. For him, revolutionary change was only possible through self-realization and collective action and not the workings of an intellectual cabal. Marx remained skeptical that agricultural cooperatives could be serviceable substitutes for factories, noting that peasant collectives (*mirs*, *selskoye obshchestvo*, or *obshchina*) were tending toward extinction.²² He also recognized, though, a Communistic consciousness in them.²³ The absence of a real bourgeoisie to overthrow, or capitalism to overcome, in a predominantly feudal Russia led observers to favor Marx's latter perspective. Some envisioned a European socialist future and not an "atavistic agrarian communal model," with a view to adapting Marxism to local conditions.²⁴

Decades later, Mao and Hou Yuon encountered a similar problem in relating the agrarian question to their respective societies with comparatively small proletariats. Mao's class analyses of rural society and adaptation of Marxism-Leninism to China's historical situation provided the groundwork for Yuon to do the same with Maoism in Cambodia: they offered a helpful critical interpretive paradigm to deduce problems and develop concrete solutions to them. Yuon's engagement with Maoism was through a practical lens that recognized that Cambodia served as merely a cog in the moving wheel of an already-prosperous imperial nation's wealth machine.

Rural-Urban Divide

Many of Yuon's proposals that underpinned CPK policies in the 1970s are informed by a creative practical application of Marxist concepts to the Cambodian reality.²⁵ Central to Yuon's argument for reform is his diagnosis of an unequal rural-urban relationship (a dependency theory interpretation of state monopoly capitalism) and his recommendations for its replacement with one that gave the poorer strata a fighting chance to improve their lot. Dependency theory held that the world's poorer countries constituted a "periphery" wherein their respective economies were pegged to the world's wealthy "core" nations. French-Egyptian Marxian economist and Maoist, Samir Amin, identified the principal contradiction within this capitalist-imperialist system, globally,

as between monopoly capital and the overexploited masses.²⁶ The solution, for him, was to break from this globalized economy and develop socialism autonomously.

But as with the underdeveloped global periphery and wealthy core, so too with a developing country's cities and countryside. Marx and Engels noted that in creating large cities and increasing the urban population relative to the rural one, the bourgeoisie had "made the country dependent on the towns [and] made barbarian and semi-underdeveloped countries dependent on the civilized ones, nations of peasants on nations of bourgeois, the East on the West."²⁷ This was the case in Cambodia, where France had prioritized constructing its protectorate around a small group of French-educated elites and structuring the economy to produce surpluses of rice and rubber.

Colonial domination had initiated a profound, although very slow, readjustment of the relations between political powers and social forces in an example of state monopoly capitalism (specifically, state intervention in the economy to protect monopolistic interests). In acquiring the collaboration of the traditional civil servants and endowing rural authorities such as district and commune chiefs (*Cauhvāysruk* and *Meghum*) with increased powers, the colonial administration damaged the protective relations and reciprocal obligations through which authority was exercised in Khmer countries. The misappropriation and exactions of the new elite of bureaucrats, the increase in taxation, the expansion of merchant agriculture along the river, and the indebtedness in rural areas triggered the first agrarian tensions.²⁸

After independence in 1953, many problems that arose during the French colonial years, notably the effects of the French consolidation of private property to reshape the land tenure system in an arguably capitalistic direction, had reduced the Cambodian countryside, according to Yuon, to a semifeudal state. These unresolved problems prevented the Cambodian agricultural sector from sustainable development on a more equitable basis. Despite growth in commercial agriculture in Cambodia, and farmers producing more for export, agriculture was "enmeshed in a dense network of feudal and pre-capitalist relations . . . [which] gives the Cambodian economy its semi-feudal and semi-colonial character."²⁹ Although Yuon's assessment of the agricultural sector as semifeudal until the 1940s was accurate, by the 1950s it was somewhat of a stretch, especially in comparison with the economic situation of Vietnam or China (Yuon's statistical data of Cambodia, after all, were from 1949 to 1951).

One of the main reasons why the Cambodian agricultural sector was semifeudal, Hou Yuon continues, was because the country's postindependence rural-urban divide established an unequal relationship between cores (cities) and peripheries (rural areas). Yuon's position mirrors that of Samir Amin, who

was also an influence on Yuon's mentee Khieu Samphan. Amin held that precapitalist (Third World) economies were forcibly integrated into a world market by Euro-American capitalist imperialism to supply inexpensive labor. The principal contradiction of this international capitalist system was thus between monopoly capital as represented by towns (cores) and the overexploited countryside (peripheries). Underdeveloped economies were elements in this capitalist economy, as capitalist cores exploited precapitalist peripheries through the structural adjustment to capital accumulation. Small elites within the Third World, and more developed consumerist mass-market cores abroad, imported luxury goods produced through unsustainably cheap low-wage labor. This entrenched a "cyclical phenomenon" of exploitation of underdeveloped countries in which subsistence farmers and handicraftsmen experienced the brunt of an "imbalance between savings and investment . . . a form of the more general imbalance between the capacity for production and the company's capacity for consumption."³⁰

At the center of this imbalanced system were cities, which for Yuon represented nexuses of market domination and "pumps that drain away the vitality of the rural areas."³¹ Marx and Engels had discussed the rural-urban divide in their writings, wherein they intimated that the town symbolized the "conception of the population, of the instruments of production, of capital, of pleasures, of needs, while the country demonstrates just the opposite fact, isolation and separation."³² A framework of private property that concretized urbanites and country folk survived the resultant "antagonism" between towns and countryside.

Yuon's position reflects a similar outlook. On a macroscale, exploitation by the global market for resources from the world's peripheries (underdeveloped, newly independent nations), both human and natural, prevented forward progression and forced underdeveloped countries like Cambodia into a "cyclical phenomenon."³³ As a result, Yuon's homeland remained poor even with independence from France. Cambodia's hasty integration into the global market accounted for neither its economic development nor what commodities average Cambodians could afford. The outcome was Cambodia's entrenchment in a capitalist world order in which its economic and industrial fate was inextricable from the perpetuation of commodity and capital production for export and outside profit.

Hou Yuon's criticism of cities—the principal sites of this ongoing unilateral exchange—concerns productivity. For Marx, it was necessary for capitalism to mature fully as a precondition of the self-awareness of an alienated existence. The proletariat could then effect change and the peasants follow along. "Only the fall of the capitalist can help the peasant," Marx urged, and

“only an anti-capitalist, a proletarian government can end his economic misery, his social degradation.”³⁴ But in China and the Global South, where there was no appreciable proletariat, vanguards tried to lead peasants to revolution.

Yvon avoids explicit mention of a vanguard. He did so likely out of fear of drawing too much attention to his activities in progressive intellectual circles, which might have compromised his scholarship and employment prospects in Cambodia (he had lost it before, only recovering it in January 1953).³⁵ He instead promotes the contradictory term “agricultural proletariat” to address the lack of a sizable industrial working class in Cambodia and to account for the property-less nature of this class. It was important to categorize this group as such because they were full-time wagedworkers employed by what he classifies, in Maoist fashion, as a semifeudal agricultural enterprise. Although Yvon avoids weighing the revolutionary potential of Cambodia’s agricultural proletariat, he highlights their productivity despite adversity and their mobilization as important variables to consider when reforming the Cambodian rural economy.

Cambodia’s agricultural sector, Yvon argues next, supplied cities with necessary commodities, but cities and market towns only consumed or exported rather than produced for the countryside. This mirrors Marx’s recognition that a fundamental contradiction in capitalism is that of workers, who are at once producers and consumers. Capitalists kept wages low yet expected workers to produce. Mao tackled a similar contradiction present in China. He noted that urban workers’ labor productivity was higher and their living costs lower than those of peasants, but that wages of a small segment of workers and state personnel were “a little too high.” Thus, as Mao contended, peasants had reason to cry foul and the CCP had to make “appropriate adjustments according to specific circumstances.”³⁶

In Cambodia’s economic system, however, products were exported for, or consumed by, only those wealthy, mostly foreign, few at the expense of the majority population. Yvon elaborates that

there is . . . a two way circulation . . . of imports that flows from the great Cholon [largely Chinese district of Saigon] business houses and branches out into the whole country, first to the small wholesale houses that comprise the secondary arteries, and then to small retailers, whose thatch shops may even be established at the corner of two ricefield embankments, completing the arterial network. These arteries are common to both circulation systems: they convey imported products out to the most remote parts of [Cambodia’s] countryside, but they also drain away

all the paddy that remains in peasant and smallholder hands, and delivers it first to the small wholesale merchant in the provincial centre, and finally, due to the organization of transport, connects the entire wholesale rice trade to the shops of the big Cholon importers where the paddy is delivered for export, ending the circulation and closing the trade cycle.

The Cambodian market, moreover, was such that the peasant was “twice robbed” when he sells his product and held ransom when he buys product.³⁷ Foreign monopolies and intermediaries held all the reins of Cambodia’s commerce sector at nearly every level of the organization and distribution of merchandise and credit. This dual system of exploitation pillaged peasants at every level and widened the socioeconomic gap in Cambodia’s agricultural sector.

Yvon then paints a picture of a destitute and indebted Cambodian peasantry in which he acknowledges that landlordism was not rampant in Cambodia like in Vietnam or China, and that nearly all farmers held *some* land, but plots were so miniscule that peasants could not conceivably sustain themselves by tilling them. Agricultural yields, particularly in rice, were the lifeblood of the rural strata. Unequal exchange and the absence of modern technology erased what little living they could generate for themselves. Cambodian soil was of especially low quality, and many peasants did not own their own land. Many peasants remained poor even when the population quadrupled between 1900 and 1950.³⁸ Landlords and wealthy farmers often forced poor peasants to depend on sharecropping, pay debts in kind, or sell their labor outright to make even modest ends meet. Already constrained by French-imposed taxes and below-market value paid by merchants for their product, peasants could not afford fertilizers or modern equipment, thus forcing them to borrow money at impossible rates to repay debts.³⁹

On Yvon’s characterization of the degree of class stratification and polarization in Cambodia, scholars contest his appraisal. Stephen Heder charges that Yvon exaggerates the situation “in part on account of [his] political convictions and hopes.” Heder claims that Cambodia was “only beginning to display class stratification. . . . Agricultural and non-agricultural working classes comprised a mere 4 per cent of the active work force; practically the whole of the upper class strata comprised civil servants or petty traders.”⁴⁰ This challenges Yvon’s division of the Cambodian agricultural sector into five classes of peasants. Jean Delvert’s study of Battambang, Prey Veng, and Svay Rieng notes that some areas were exceptional in that landlord-tenant conflict existed, which is why they were attractive sites for the CPK to manipulate peasant unrest.

He concludes, however, that Cambodian peasant society was “a democracy of small owner-tillers, under the commercial domination of the Chinese and at a mediocre standard of living,” thus it experienced “no agrarian problem.”⁴¹

In agreement with Delvert, William Willmott contends that Yuon exaggerated the number of poor peasants and proprietors, and that there was “little social basis for rural discontent (except in pockets) when the [CPK] began to organize the peasantry in the Kampuchean revolution.”⁴² Most families owned their land, though the majority of peasants neither lived comfortably nor owned mid-to-large plots. May Ebihara’s ethnographic study of Svay village reveals that although Yuon is correct that most peasants neither lived comfortably nor owned mid-to-large plots (less than a hectare per household), traditional sharecropping arrangements were “mutually beneficial [and] not as exploitative rent extracted by the rich from the poor.”⁴³ Alexander Hinton elaborates that one could describe life in this hamlet as containing “an ethos of egalitarianism, a tradition of mutual aid, and a lack of significant class stratification.”⁴⁴ Although class stratification was a very real problem, its severity in Cambodia’s agricultural sector paled in comparison with the situations in China and Vietnam. Despite these valid criticisms, Yuon’s dissertation shed important light on the effects of marketization on the agricultural sector. Marketization had tied peasants’ fates either to outsider interests or to internal feudalistic enterprises and forced them to rely on surpluses or paying usurers for land costs.⁴⁵

State-Supported Autonomous Development

As for the second major theme, Yuon urges Sihanouk’s government, as representative of the majority will, to intervene and ensure the peasants’ quality of life based on *their* requirements. Peasants themselves could then have a voice in shaping postindependence Cambodian rural society, and the state could use its power to break the status quo. Yuon’s proposal, less democratic centralism in a purely Leninist sense—his goal was not to overthrow the state *at this immediate stage*—emphasizes the peasants governing their sector according to their needs. Instead of a rigid interpretation of democratic centralism, Yuon recognizes that aspects were not politically expedient at that time. But the core essence of the concept, the people’s right to determine *their own* activity and to be the ones to shape it, remains largely intact (albeit with peasants instead of a classical proletariat).⁴⁶

Additionally, if the state equipped peasants, whose inability to increase productivity was due to their “primitive and archaic” tools and techniques, with modern farming technologies, then their living standards would improve.⁴⁷

Marx and Engels had proposed a theory of productive forces in which true liberation (social change) was achieved through technological advancement (technical change). Yuon places this responsibility *on the state* rather than against it.⁴⁸ He calls for establishing Machine Tractor Stations (MTS) not unlike those in Soviet *kolkhozes*, wherein cooperative tool use could reverse low production yields by giving peasants “full use of scientific and technological methods, and [therefore] increase their standard of living.”⁴⁹ Only then could the state maximize rural production, minimize poor peasant and semiproletarian suffering, and free the nation’s poorest from exploitation by foreign market dominance and debt bondage.⁵⁰

Other correctives to foreign exploitation, Yuon proposes, include a Maoist mobilizational solution and a voluntarist social ontology. Mao believed that anything was possible if a project had enough force and willpower behind it, which is encapsulated in the axiom “Whether it moves or not, have a movement” (Dongbudong jiu laige yundong).⁵¹ For Yuon, agriculture and, vicariously, Cambodia’s whole economy were “his [the peasant’s] life and his strength . . . the transformation of the semi-feudal and semi-colonial economy of Cambodia into a prosperous national economy . . . on the basis of modernization and technological development [and by] relying on their [peasants’] immense potential strength, both economic and human.”⁵² This reflects Mao’s post-1949 espousal of Soviet-style industrialization and rural reforms to strengthen China’s national economy. Land reform was complete by 1951, after which the CCP organized mutual aid teams and low-to-advanced-level cooperatives.⁵³

Differences between Mao and Yuon are nevertheless present. Yuon argues that the agricultural proletariat is familiar with collective labor and accepted labor organizations “on the basis of a united leadership” that defends its interests. This group, he prophesies, will “use the land rationally and start various crops on land that suits them,” which in turn will reverse their suffering.⁵⁴ He also regards peasant strength in terms of economic ability contributing to the national economy. Yuon’s position here is more akin to economist-structuralist Maoism in the Soviet mold, onto which he grafts Maoist mobilization. In the case of peasant mobilization in China, by contrast, Mao stressed political energy (and violent overthrow of oppressive rural order), which he did during the Anti-Japanese Resistance War when the united front was in full effect in CCP base areas. Although Yuon may have supported the overthrow of the entire order in Cambodia in private, this position is not present in his dissertation. He either genuinely wanted to fix the system through a bloc-within strategy or feared losing his Cambodian government bursary again over antigovernment sentiment.

Analysis of Cambodia's Rural Classes and Peasant Voluntarism

Next, Yuon presents a complex analysis of the classes in Cambodian rural society. "A central aspect of a revolutionary ideology," Willmott notes, "is the analysis of the society to estimate the revolutionary potential of its various classes. While many Marxists would insist that the ideology flows from the analysis . . . the two [are] dialectically related, for the ideology also determines the analysis to a large extent."⁵⁵ This was the case for Yuon, who uses Maoist class categories to highlight intrinsic inequality in Cambodia's agricultural sector. Like Marx, Engels, and Mao, Yuon regards peasants as victims of the same bourgeois capitalist exploitation as the urban proletariat.

Though peasants could stand in opposition of their own proletarianization and prevent socialism's realization, Marx, Engels, and Mao were generally flexible in terms of resistance against an exploitative government and economic system. In predominantly agricultural countries, Marx and Engels recognized the necessity of "an appeal to the rural masses." An "emerging proletariat" might even take the reins of the Communist movement since workers in underdeveloped countries might respond more radically and responsively to their plight than workers in more developed locales.⁵⁶ Yuon is aware of this fact. He declares that "no study" on the peasant question in Cambodia exists, as Cambodian agriculture "is entangled in a dense network of feudal and pre-capitalist relations" and, thus, "quite delicate."⁵⁷

In his analysis, Yuon applies Mao's categorizations from the full corpus of his rural investigations to argue that the Cambodian countryside contains five social categories. He lists and describes them as the following: (1) landlords: individuals who hold land of ten and fifty hectares in size, form part of the feudal class, and rather than work the land, earn by renting, sharecropping, or employing debt bondmen; (2) rich peasants: landowners who own but do not work land, have bourgeois connections, and have agricultural equipment and important working capital; (3) middle peasants: a strata that own agricultural equipment, do not exploit the labor of others consistently, but do not themselves sell their labor (Yuon says that this class is part of the petty bourgeoisie); (4) poor peasants: the largest and most complex category, they lack agricultural equipment, some have no land at all, and many either rent land or are exploited by paying rent and interest on debts through selling their labor; and (5) the semiproletariat: permanent agricultural workers who are partial tenants, poor peasants, landless peasants, and debt bondsmen from impoverished peasant families (all of whom are poor or exploited by usury).⁵⁸ Only

by organizing into mutual aid teams, Yuon asserts, will peasants obtain real collective power and gain the “capacity and opportunity to defend and build their standard of living into one of happiness and dignity.”⁵⁹ Mutual aid teams—the union of all peasant groups into a cooperative effort to improve rural economic life—therefore required participation across socioeconomic lines.

Mutual Aid Teams

The solution to the unequal distribution of wealth, opportunity, and tools to cultivate lands was, in Yuon’s view, for peasants to organize in peasant-organized bands in which all land and means of production that belonged to peasants was “put towards the cooperative and used communally.” Peasants must organize, he urges, lest they “have no power, and do not have complete capacity to defend their standard of living.”⁶⁰ Yuon’s proposal for the establishment of “mutual aid teams” recalls the Marxist question of cooperatives and Mao’s later musings of peasant communes.⁶¹ Marx argued that the 1848–1864 experience “proved beyond doubt that, however excellent in principle and however useful in practice, co-operative labor, if kept within the narrow circle of the casual efforts of private workmen, will never be able to arrest the growth in geometrical progression of monopoly, to free the masses, nor even to perceptibly lighten the burden of their miseries.”⁶² In China from the late 1940s to early 1950s, mutual aid teams (*huzhuzu*) were the first step of CCP-organized economic reform after land reform. Most villagers joined them voluntarily (*ziyuan*) because “mutual help and the way they were compensated had long been a tradition in their community” and mutual aid team participation was “more regular during the busy season.”⁶³

Yuon, by contrast, holds that the more mutual aid teams, the “greater the mode of production and the more abundant the harvest.” As he describes further:

[While] private ownership of the means of production remains [...] . . . the difference with the individual farm is that the work is done collectively. Each member of the group retains its individual operation; he may augment or discard his product as he wants. When he goes to work . . . with another member of the group, he brings with him his own tools. [Mutual aid teams] therefore pool production resources temporarily for the accomplishment of a specific job. Group participants are not paid. . . . At the end of the day, everyone goes home respectively in . . . carrying with him his equipment. And the cycle continues under the same principle.

As is evident, Yuon diverges from Marx's position on the utility of cooperatives. His state-assisted mutual aid teams were modeled after the MTS, but the goal was nevertheless the same: to destroy semifeudalism by reorienting the agrarian sector around collective production. Aid teams were to be "semi-socialist" and "semi-mechanical," whereby land, draft animals, and tools became shared property and available for everyone's use.⁶⁴ The result, then, would be that peasants pooled their production resources for the accomplishment of a common goal and could return from work with their own equipment in tow with a view to working collectively the next day.

Modernization of Cambodia's Productive Forces

In his conclusion, Yuon proposes that Cambodia ought to normalize trade relations with China and North Vietnam, and somewhat idealistically (even the CPK relied on Chinese aid), for the country to become economically self-sufficient.⁶⁵ On the latter, onetime managing director of the Colonial Finance Company (*La Société financière française et coloniale*), Paul Bernard, was a major influence.⁶⁶ Bernard argued that Indochina's economy ought to be its own market to satisfy its own needs, and in this market, peasants ought to have a decent standard of living.⁶⁷ As he elaborated: "The point of industrializing Indochina is to equip the colony once and for all such that it can, alone, constitute an independent economic entity, able to produce everything necessary for its population to live and improve its lot. In short, we aim to turn this country, by means of its full industrial development, into a 'living body,' having a 'harmonious equilibrium between the trunk and limbs,' a veritable second-metropole, forming an economic unit more or less distinct from that of France."⁶⁸ Although Bernard wrote his piece long before Cambodian independence, his argument rang true even after the country's independence in 1953, as the end of French colonial rule neither resulted in economic independence nor elevated the peasants' standard of living.

The complete abolition of feudal production, Yuon contends, was *sine qua non* for land products to go to those who grow them. Only then could the "potential strengths of the campaigns [of national emancipation] be freed from feudal remnants and colonial vestiges and establish the necessary industrial conditions and bases for the country's development." Any assistance "must contribute to the development of our national independence, industries, and agriculture, and must not be accompanied by grants of economic or military privileges of any kind." No matter what, Yuon concludes, Cambodia "must count principally on its own forces. It has everything to gain in peace and everything to lose in war."⁶⁹

Yuon then presents three avenues for the cultivation of the necessary capital to achieve his vision of a truly independent Cambodia: (1) patriotic and liberated people working strenuously to break from the chains of feudal and semifeudal relations; (2) normalized economic relations between all countries on the principles of equality and mutual interest, including the reestablishment of commercial relations with China and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam; and (3) working closely with international aid organizations to improve the nation's agricultural development. In these avenues Yuon's position on internationalism, or his interpretation thereof, reveals itself: "[Our problem] is serious and not unique to Cambodia but common to all underdeveloped countries. They cannot appeal to foreign capital without compromising their independence and freedom of which they are justifiably jealous because they are dearly acquired. . . . They fear foreign control over important sectors of their economy. . . . [But] corrupt or reactionary cliques' domination could be overthrown by the people if there were no outside assistance to consolidate their dominant positions. This appreciation dispenses us from considering here the question of foreign aid. It will lead us into a certain impasse."⁷⁰ To him, Cambodia was one among many nations resisting foreign capitalist domination, and its people part of a larger movement to cast out the corrupt and exploitative few for the good of the many. Cambodia therefore had to solidify economic ties with nonaligned nations, Communist China and Vietnam particularly, on the principles of mutual interest rather than the US or Soviet norm of tailoring economic ties with friendly nations to their own, geopolitical interests. Though Yuon also suggests, rather antithetically, that international aid organizations could play a role—a position that his protégés Khieu Samphan and Hu Nim did not share—he is cautious in stating that such organizations would not operate in a way that was detrimental to Cambodian peasants. He does not elaborate much on how this would take shape, but despite advocating for peace instead of violence, Yuon's approach does reflect the era's larger anticolonial wave.⁷¹

Yuon expanded this proposal nearly a decade later in his book *The Cooperative Question*, a "blueprint for a 'United Front' between Communists and anti-imperialists." A united front against American imperialism, Yuon urged, was requisite for the development of a new type (cooperatives) with an emphasis on modernization. Sihanouk's modest socialist economic reforms, which included the rejection of US aid, growth of national capitalism, and improved conditions for farmers and workers, had spun off course. Yuon identifies both "the main contradiction . . . between the whole Khmer nation and the American imperialists" and an "internal contradiction" between oppressive and op-

pressed classes.⁷² If unresolved, Yuon cautions, these two contradictions would undermine any gains from Sihanouk's recent reforms.

The solution to rural problems was, once again, to modernize the productive forces and to free the peasantry from usury and capitalist exploitation. Yuon called for a system of cooperatives, in which peasants and workers combine their labor power, enthusiasm, and wealth to work cooperatively based on strict equality. He lists three types of rural cooperatives that could work within a larger socialist system: (1) seasonal, permanent labor pools, in which peasants accumulate their labor power to work the land as a cohesive productive unit; (2) production cooperatives that accumulate labor forces in a much stronger and rigid organization than the labor pools; and (3) common property cooperatives, which are the end goal, in which all tools were for the use of the common organization.⁷³

Organization was the launchpad to his cooperative vision. Mao had stressed the same in 1943, when the CCP had to focus on self-sufficiency because of the war against Japan and tensions with the GMD. As Mao urged, "The gist of [our] policy is to organize the masses, to mobilize and organize into a great army of labor all the available forces without exception."⁷⁴ Although differing from Mao's call somewhat, each of Yuon's proposals sought to enable cooperatives to "leap forward in strength," and for cooperative leadership to be "truly in the hands of the people" and working for their interests.⁷⁵ He does stress, however, that these types of cooperatives stood no chance of succeeding in improving peasants' welfare without organization and financial backing. Cooperatives would only then usher in an era during which city and countryside, industry and agriculture, will function harmoniously. Otherwise, he concludes, the Khmer people would have to resort to armed struggle against US imperialism, the principal oppressive force preventing the rural poor from alleviating themselves of poverty.

Overview

Yuon's "careful research" represents a radical analysis of the Cambodian countryside that highlights problems in the agricultural sector (usury, poverty, exploitation, *inter alia*) through the lens of Maoism.⁷⁶ Both of his major writings clearly reflect his thinking of the time in which he authored them, and he maintained his position on such issues until the CPK purged him. Yuon held throughout his academic and political life that peasants were Cambodia's lifeblood. He devoted much of his time to identifying and proposing solutions to rural problems, many of which weighed down most heavily on the poorest

strata. His dissertation brought to light many of the causes of peasant suffering: capitalist exploitation, foreign market dominance, usury, and a stark rural-urban divide. The solutions, for him, were state-sponsored peasant organization in mutual aid teams and national self-reliance.

Though Yuon did not have access to Mao's early 1930s rural investigations in Xunwu, Xingguo, Mukou Village, Changgang Township, or Caixi Township, he engaged in the same kind of close analysis that Mao did decades earlier. Mao did not follow up with further investigations, but his subsequent policy was informed by his conviction that it was important to ensure that all policy "took reality as its starting point" (*cong shiji chufa*). As for Yuon, however radical his proposals were in the 1950s, he was a moderate among his CPK peers in the 1970s and he became a victim of the Party's excesses. Mao could overlook his own earlier "deviations," but Yuon was not the one to render a verdict on his views and was eventually condemned to death for them.

Hu Nim (alias Phoas, 1930/32–1977)

Hou Yuon's Paris Group and AAKC comrade Hu Nim was born in Korkor village, Kampong Siem district, Kampong Cham in 1930 to a poor farming family of mixed Sino-Khmer lineage.⁷⁷ He lived for a time in a pagoda (Vatt Unñālom) because he could not afford to board during his studies, and earned the nickname "Buddhist monk" (*breaḥ saṅgh*) among his friends.⁷⁸ A talented student, he gained admission to the prestigious Collège Norodom Sihanouk in 1942, then to Lycée Sisowath. At twenty-two, Nim joined the left-leaning Democratic Party and participated in antigovernment demonstrations before a Democratic Party policy that encouraged study in France for gifted students led him to accept a Cambodian government scholarship to study in Paris in 1955. After his arrival in Paris that year, Nim intended to train as a customs officer and studied at a customs school but also enrolled in law school in the French capital. There, he met Hou Yuon and Khieu Samphan, two men who joined him in the guerrilla struggle a decade later. A dedicated student, Nim recalled in 1977 that he used to travel "several hours" by metro to reach law school from the Paris suburb of Neuilly, and that he attended classes for his customs officer degree in the morning while attending law school during the afternoon and evening. In between, "political activities were not carried out because [his] studies required so much attention."⁷⁹ He joined the UEK, was its leader Hou Yuon's mentee for a time, and obtained a law degree in 1957. He returned to Cambodia a moderate among his more radical peers, joined the PSC in 1958, and earned a doctorate in law at Royal Khmer University



FIGURE 4.2. Hu Nim (*center*) warmly greeting Head of State Norodom Sihanouk (*right*) during his 1973 inspection tour of the liberated zone. An open leftist, Hu Nim worked in Sihanouk's National Assembly until he fled to the *maquis* in 1967. From a special issue of *China Pictorial*, no. 6, 1973. *Public domain*.

(Sākalvidyālay Bhūmind Khmer; renamed Royal University of Phnom Penh) in 1966.⁸⁰

Nim also worked as undersecretary of state in the National Assembly in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Krasuon Kārparades Kampuchea), whereupon realizing that “functional corruption” under Sihanouk was “admitted, condemned, and then ignored,” he developed an outspoken nature that actually won him reelection twice (in 1962 and 1966). He criticized the royal family’s “grand corruption,” though his words were ignored, as Sihanouk was powerless to stop it.⁸¹ Nim’s leftist views that grew during his Paris years soon evolved into a genuine China-curiosity. His “leftist activities”—namely, founding the AAKC in Phnom Penh in September 1964—won him considerable favor among Chinese leaders, and he led a delegation to China before “the Cultural Revolution had . . . broken out,” where he met Zhou Enlai and Liu Shaoqi.⁸²

Afterward, Nim became vocally supportive of China and Maoism. He developed “close contacts” with the Chinese embassy in Phnom Penh and declared that he “respected and studied Mao Zedong thought, and . . . took a stand against the revisionists—the Soviet Union.”⁸³ The 22 October 1965 issue of *Peking Review* (*Beijing zhoubao*) provides evidence of an October 1965

Khmer-Chinese Friendship Association delegation led by its vice president Hu Nim, which was welcomed by Liu and Zhou. Nim's banquet speech, transcribed by *Peking Review*, reveals where both associations stood politically and ideologically: "US imperialism and its stooges are not all happy to see a close friendship between Cambodia and China. But this is a good thing. Future developments will further prove the correctness of Chairman Mao Tse-tung's thesis that the East wind is prevailing over the West wind."⁸⁴ Sihanouk did not condemn Nim's comments but received them with unease; he now suspected Nim's allegiance was to Beijing instead of to him.

Sihanouk lambasted China for abandoning peaceful coexistence in favor of Cultural Revolution radicalism, and singled out "a number of Khmer who aid China," Hu Nim in particular, as "the most dissolute and dishonest" of the lot.⁸⁵ He attacked Nim publicly for his China ties and with "increasingly threatening invective." At a 5 October press conference, Sihanouk threatened him openly: "In front of the people, I told [him] I would prepare two files. . . . I warned them [Nim and his friends] that if they did not go to China, and if they continued their [activities], I would produce these files and they would have to face the military tribunal."⁸⁶ Despite Nim's pledge of loyalty, which he delivered to rebuff allegations that he and other leftists had hatched an anti-Sihanouk plot, Sihanouk branded him as a Communist and urged Hu Nim to flee to the jungle (which he did in 1967). Nim subsequently moved up the CPK ranks to form an integral part of the party's Central Committee (1967–1975) (see figure 4.2).⁸⁷

Before he fled the capital, Hu Nim wrote an economics doctoral dissertation in which he engaged with Maoism closely to frame solutions to problems in the agrarian sector and to call for radical social change in Cambodia. As the study reveals, Nim's reception of Maoism, a core feature of the production of Cambodian Maoism, was somewhat different from Yuon's earlier work on a similar topic. Nim references Mao and Chinese vice premier Li Fuchun explicitly and betrays a deep appreciation of China's industrial development and agricultural collectivization endeavors. Nim's dissertation is thus profoundly useful in tracking the development of Cambodian Maoism from Yuon's intellectual adaptation of Maoist theory to the faith Maoism of Pol Pot, as Nim's work lies somewhere in between.

A Maoist Peasant Analysis: Hu Nim's Doctoral Dissertation and Practical Reception

An important document for any study of CPK thought, Hu Nim's dissertation on land tenure, socioeconomic inequality, and rural social structure in

Cambodia was defended before Royal Khmer University's Faculty of Law on 4 June 1965. His dissertation takes "a progressive stand," providing an outline of his leftist vision for Cambodia.⁸⁸ His work identifies the "structural evolution of the Cambodian economy," in which a disproportionate amount of the country's agricultural wealth was concentrated in the hands of a small number of landowners.⁸⁹ Despite Sihanouk co-opting Nim and other leftist officials after crushing the Democratic and socialist Pracheachon Parties, Nim's dissertation reflects his serious engagement with Maoism. Although his interest in Mao's works began in France, his trip to Beijing in 1965 is what sold him on Mao's thought and China's radical transformation.⁹⁰ The dissertation examines the Chinese, North Korean, and North Vietnamese models of development in an admirable light and praises the Chinese leadership, in particular, for the larger and more economically diversified People's Communes.⁹¹

Hu Nim was acting vice president of the Maoist AAKC at the time—that is, until Sihanouk disbanded it in 1967, citing Chinese interference.⁹² Nim's ties to China might explain why one scholar described his thesis as a "detailed Maoist analysis of the peasant problem."⁹³ One can definitely see why. Nim uses Mao's categories and definitions from his 1955 investigation of rural class structure to identify and correct Cambodian economic problems. Mao's original work on peasants, which Nim references, guides his 1965 dissertation and later shaped his vision for Cambodian society, from his denunciation of exploitation by state monopoly capitalism and the bureaucratic bourgeoisie to calls for a planned economy.⁹⁴ This section focuses on four primary problems that Nim addresses in his work: (1) Cambodia's ongoing exploitation in an unequal global market; (2) reorienting development with Asian Communist case studies as models for comparison; (3) unequal land distribution in the rural sector, a section in which Nim presents a Maoist class analysis to identify and correct it; and (4) harnessing the semiproletariat for systemic changes to the Cambodian agricultural economy.

Cambodia and Global Market Exploitation

Hu Nim expanded on Yuon's argument that Cambodia's economy was oriented exploitatively around foreign interests. Nim argues that valuable foreign exchange was "wasted" in its dependence on imported goods for Cambodia's modest number of urban elites. The nation's agrarian structure, meanwhile, remained dominated by a minuscule percentage of well-off rural inhabitants. This, in turn, eliminated any chance for lower peasant strata to improve their lot. Nim pointed to the persistence of usury as a major hindrance to development, with the "sale of green crop on credit" contributing to increasing rates of usury.⁹⁵

As a corrective, Nim argues that the state must seize control of foreign trade and finance, with autonomous development and agricultural cooperatives replacing private sectors. State-sponsored planning mechanisms and specialized state economic organizations, state-directed private trade and industry, industry-supported agricultural development, and affordable consumer goods production were other worthwhile initiatives. Cooperatives, in particular, would allow peasants to organize their own credit system and work for mutual benefit, both of which would end debt bondage, sharecropping, and payment in kind. If landlords and wealthy peasants had to rely on their own productive labor, and the vast majority of peasants could prosper with ameliorated living and working standards, then the countryside could serve the majority of Cambodians and the nation could move toward autonomous development.

Reorientation of Cambodian Development

Nim presents his case studies of public economic services in North Korea, China, and North Vietnam, wherein models, stages of development, and cooperatives are noteworthy for his argument. He lauds North Korea for its “shining example of a successful scientific socialist path,” commitment to self-reliance, and intimate economic cooperation between “all countries of the socialist camp.” Its industrial success, he notes, was due to the “active workers’ spirit of the Korean people,” which in five short years had established one large cooperative per district.⁹⁶

Nim then shifts to China. He commends the CCP leadership for the “Little Leap” (1953–1957), which for him was indicative of how the Party-state worked toward the realization of its general line and its communes as a function of its systematic socialization. In particular, Nim praises Chinese leaders’ “realist spirit”: “[They] know best how to combine uncompromising revolutionary spirit and practical and scientific creativity. . . . The practical spirit, the desire to respect concrete conditions, led Chinese leaders to adopt the method of rectification of the style of work.”⁹⁷ Since 1960, Nim notes, the CCP had realized that there was no need to follow the Soviet model any further, that it must distance itself from the Soviet link of industry to agriculture (and vice versa), and that it must depend on its own resources to become self-reliant. After a brief analysis of similar features in North Vietnam, Nim details the evolution of economic public services in Cambodia, with suggestions that his cases prove the suitability of their autonomous socialist approaches for the Cambodian situation.⁹⁸

Maoist Class Analysis and a Solution to Unequal Land Distribution

Nim combines Maoist class categories with a more substantial statistical base than Yuon had used a decade prior. Nim's position as a government minister granted him access to late 1950s–early 1960s Cambodian statistical yearbooks (*Annuaire Statistique du Cambodge*), National Import-Export Company (*Société Nationale d'Exportation et d'Importation*) monthly reports and an annual report for 1964, and records of the national budget from 1959 to 1964. Most of all, these sources highlight Cambodia's unequal land distribution, which Nim argues is the root cause of myriad problems in Cambodia's agricultural sector.

Clearly drawing on Mao's classificatory scheme of rural socioeconomic classes, Nim divides Cambodian landowners according to land sizes and overall yields: (1) landed proprietors with over ten hectares of land who depend on high rent for peasants and forced sharecropping; (2) landed wealthy peasants with over five hectares who depend on the wage labor of others; (3) middle peasants with two to five hectares on which they work without help, though they occasionally rent land for sustenance; (4) poor peasants, the great majority, who own little to no land (one or two hectares depending on region) or hold small holdings at the expense of the necessary tools to work it, sustaining themselves through sharecropping or living on another's land; and (5) agricultural wage earners, a group that holds no land and depends on the sale of its labor to maintain the most modest existence (6.6 percent of the population, or 156,7000 people by Nim's 1962 census figures).⁹⁹

Nim determined that over a quarter-million families (30.7% of all farming households) had just 126,800 hectares of land (merely 5.18% of total cultivated area in 1962). A mere 4 percent of the population held four hectares or more, for 21.45 percent of the land. More stark, though, was the percentage of Cambodia's farming population with virtually nothing (exceeding 50%). Cambodia's population increase meant that the actual number of smallholders increased from 669,000 families in 1956 (92% of 727,000) to 718,000 in 1962 (86% of 835,000). Several causes, including rice lands expansion, deficient tenure records, and major discrepancies between figures for land owned and land sowed, paired with statistical anomalies to make it difficult to ascertain the situation fully. Nim contends that the 1962 census figures on renting and sharecropping "did not accurately reflect the situation since many of the very small landowners had to rent land or sell their labor in order to subsist," and estimated that upward of 25 percent of agricultural families rented or were sharecroppers.¹⁰⁰

Hu Nim then examines the nature of land tenancy with particular emphasis on the semifeudal nature of Cambodia's rural economy. He notes that the land rent system, which often depended on sharecropping or rent-in-kind (paddy before rice planting), constituted direct exploitation by landlords and wealthy peasants. This entrenched semifeudal mode of production was, for Nim, a broken system in which two agrarian phenomena of *concentration* and *fragmentation* perpetuated Cambodia's agrarian problem.

Concentration, Nim explains, is an agrarian structure in which a minority of landowners possess almost all land, whereas *fragmentation* (dispersion or scattering of plots) occurs when a majority of smallholders possess small plots of land. Concentration, he continues, is noteworthy for its high exploitation: "Small owners, poor farmers, and farm employees work for the prosperity of the big landowners," whereas fragmentation causes lower productivity and hinders innovation. In Cambodia, the two phenomena combine, as the agrarian structure is "both fragmented *and* concentrated. . . . Parcellization dominates in all the riverbank land and the fertile rice-growing regions, but for more than a decade there has been a marked tendency toward concentration, not only in the newly opened areas, but also to a limited extent in the fragmented regions themselves. . . . If concentration is in progress in certain rice-growing provinces like Battambang, fragmentation and the dispersion of holdings is increasing in the riverbank regions, and these are the most fertile regions with the highest population density."¹⁰¹ Cambodia's "parcellized structure" thus presents serious problems to development and innovation in the agricultural sector.

The trend toward concentration without intervention would only add to the vast majority of peasants' struggles. The "nature of agrarian structures," meanwhile, would "combine with the social structure of rural life to aggravate the lives of the peasants and compound the obstacles to modernization and the development of agriculture." Yet Nim cautions that the state must not force reform on its peasants; rather, because peasants are "very attached to their plots of land and their rights to it must be respected," the state ought to persuade peasants that reform is in their (and the nation's) best interest. Nim was firm in his conviction that if peasants understood the aims of "mutual help and cooperative groups," they would lend their support toward cooperatives, "the only way to escape the individual poverty cycle."¹⁰²

The Semiproletariat and Transforming the Agricultural Economy

Next, Nim makes the case that alongside the proletariat—who hold no land, farming tools, or sufficient funds, sustaining themselves solely by selling their

labor—the semiproletariat, poor peasants, and lumpenproletariat constitute the most revolutionary groups and are more likely to support economic reform and revolution. How to harness this potentially revolutionary vanguard force remained a subject for intense debate—that is, until Mao moved away from his 1920s writings’ emphasis on the proletariat as the driving force of the revolution to argue that a united front of multiple classes was the driving force of the revolution. His proposal for the “new-democratic state under the joint-dictatorship of [the] several anti-imperialist classes” was an idea from which Yuon and Nim drew to propose state-directed autonomous development *and* mutual aid teams/collectives.

Nim’s call for the state to “carry the highest possible level of political consciousness of the masses” mirrors Mao’s principles of “going up the mountains,” giving peasants their rights, and “raising the cultural level of peasants.”¹⁰³ As Mao’s homage to Marx reveals, “It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness.”¹⁰⁴ Any state initiative ought to recognize the peasants’ social being as a conduit for positive change in Cambodian society and economy, rather than perpetuating the status quo by leaving them powerless, destitute, and unable to contribute to national growth.

Hu Nim concludes by considering it a “decisive importance” to train Cambodian, not foreign, executives and to establish as another priority a policy of self-reliance to answer the “primacy to the national accumulation.”¹⁰⁵ To accomplish both, he urges, the state cannot ignore its poorest strata or favor stuffing its own coffers at their expense. Otherwise, Nim prophesies, the “negative impact of the exploiting characteristics of the current economic system would not only cause failure and plunge the country’s economy into devastating crisis, but also sharpen the contradictions among workers, peasants and feudal classes, landlords, and capitalists. The only solution [is] revolution.”¹⁰⁶

Conclusion

The first two chapters of this book discussed differing understandings of Mao’s thinking, from its genesis in the 1910s to the end of the Great Leap Forward, and showed that there were multiple Maos and multiple Mao Zedong Thoughts. As such, Hou Yuon’s views are not “very Maoist” in the totality of the phrase, but “very pre-Great Leap Maoist,” with a focus on organization, mobilization, autarky, and concrete conditions. As the next two chapters show, multiple Mao Zedong Thoughts existed within the CPK leadership itself. The Mao of 1930–1949 was no idealist, but a theoretician of practice whose

theories represented an adaptation of Marxism-Leninism to Chinese realities. Yuon was similar; he sought to uncover the reality of economic and political relations in the countryside and to formulate a theory (informed by outside ideas and experiences) that addressed the Cambodian countryside's concrete problems. Though his application of what he had read and written about in his dissertation did not succeed (his initial failed implementation), he was highly influential on his onetime mentees and CPK comrades Khieu Samphan and Hu Nim, and his activist career trajectory reveals some continuity between his proposals and CPK programs.¹⁰⁷

Yuon's story betrays the life of a civil bureaucrat whose professional life was complicit in a regime that oppressed peasants and was at complete odds with the praxis and revolutionary aspects that formed the nexus of the radical thought and political action that he held aloft. Yuon was, in the end, unable to put the theory of his student life into public practice. But while he fell victim to shifting geopolitical and domestic tides and was, ultimately, unable to exert enough influence in his limited positionality to alter political outcomes and to save himself, his contributions to CPK thought and practice must not be understated.

Nim had to rely on concrete policy—China's "Little Leap," among others from the socialist world—to frame his proposals. Before investigating the countryside and waging revolution, Mao and other Communists had focused singularly on the proletariat and semiproletariat. Theoretically defensible at the time, Mao and the CCP found in South and North China that despite the proletariat's greater enthusiasm about revolution, its uncontrolled revolutionary fervor threatened to destroy the revolution because it created too many enemies. Nim, by contrast, proposed structuring Cambodian society from both the top down and the bottom up, avoiding an outright call to arms for a Communist revolution. Like Yuon before him, he believed in reforming the country by political, democratic means. Mao and the CCP had adopted a united front strategy in "On New Democracy," a shift that was highly influential on Yuon's *Pañhā Sahakar(ṇ)* but is absent from Nim's writings.

As the next chapter discusses, Yuon and Nim later ran for, and won, several ministerial political posts within the Cambodian government. From government posts in Phnom Penh, both men began the process of putting into practice their Maoist-inspired proposals in the Cambodian countryside. Yet their ideas, if taken to an extreme, could be, and were, catastrophic.

CHAPTER 5

Like Desiccated Straw in the Rice Fields

Practical and Normative Adaptations

of Maoism, 1966–1975

The Cambodian race is of noble origin. It is not afraid of death when it is a question of fighting the enemy, of saving its religion, of liberating its fatherland. The entire race follows the Buddhist doctrine which places death above slavery and religious persecution.

—KPRP founder and spokesman Son Ngoc Minh (1920–1977), 1951

This chapter examines efforts by Pol Pot, Hou Yuon, and Hu Nim to put Maoism into practice in Cambodia and, after the political careers of Yuon and Nim ended abruptly in 1967, to adapt it into the political line of Pol Pot's newly named CPK. The political careers of Yuon and Nim signaled the end of their intellectual engagements with the Maoism that they read as students in France and the beginning of their application of Maoism to Cambodian realities. But practical adaptation occurred differently among Pol Pot, Yuon, and Nim because, importantly, they did not interpret Maoism in the same way. Pol Pot became a revolutionary in 1953 after working briefly as a schoolteacher. Yuon and Nim, by contrast, took legal-political routes and collaborated with Sihanouk. As politicians, both men failed in the face of Sihanouk's repression, which in 1967 forced them to abandon their political posts for the *maquis* (Pol Pot's rural Communist guerrillas).

Cambodia's political climate complicated any sort of vision that the Paris-educated Hou Yuon and Hu Nim had when they left France in the 1950s. In 1955, Norodom Sihanouk abdicated the throne to his father, King Suramarit, to found the PSC. He also guaranteed independent Cambodia's first free elections that year.¹ But the now former king's promise was empty. To maintain his hold on power and adhere to rigid neutrality, he suppressed and bribed leaders of the Independent Khmers (*Khmer Issarak*) and Free Khmers (*Khmer Serī*), and targeted popular politicians like Yuon and Nim for positions in his Royal

Government. Sihanouk declared himself the permanent, neo-monarchical head of state after his father Suramarit's death in April 1960, a declaration that caused an irreparable schism between his loyalists, the aristocracy, and democratic intellectuals. He subsequently tightened his grip on power, exacted harsh repression on leftists, and shuttered left-wing newspapers.

Rather than undergo political and ideological training as a cadre upon Pol Pot's return, Vietnamese Communists charged him and other Cambodian Communists (occluded from the 1954 Geneva Conference, no less) with only menial tasks.² The Cambodian Communist movement suffered mightily as a result. The Vietnamese-backed Pracheachon Group lost the election and went underground. The KPRP, the "Communist backbone" of the *Khmer Issarak*, lacked a clear political line.³ Communists thus operated clandestinely and under Hanoi's supervision and direction.

To implement a Maoist vision in Cambodia, there was the problem of fixing a broken system one way (revolution) or another (reform). Pol Pot, Yuon, and Nim worked as Communist operatives in the Pracheachon, a front organization, and infiltrated the Democratic Party as part of a bloc within strategy.⁴ Pol Pot maintained links to the Democrats through Keng Vannsak while he set out to remove Sihanouk outright. For Yuon and Nim, however, any hope for political reform had to come by operating within Sihanouk's government. Yet after both men fled for their lives and amid the destructive Cambodian Civil War (1968–1975), the bureaucratic Maoism of Hou Yuon and Hu Nim combined with Pol Pot's faith Maoism to form a new whole: a Cambodian Maoism that spoke to the concrete realities of the Cambodian Communist movement.

From Page to Paddy: Practical Adaptation

The return of Hou Yuon and Hu Nim to Cambodia marked the beginning of a new generation of Cambodian politics. Both men brought with them new perspectives from their encounters in the radical ferment of postwar Paris. Yuon returned from Paris in 1956 after completing his doctorate. He accepted a position as director at the private Lycée Kambu Both (a progressive, pro-democracy school), where he hired several left-wing teachers. Several prominent CPK figures taught there: Pol Pot after returning from his studies in Paris (without a degree) in 1953, Ieng Sary (1957), and Khieu Samphan (1959), who taught "purely political" classes and "vilified the Khmer monarchy [as] traitor-kings."⁵ Yuon was also an active Pracheachon Communist until Sihanouk co-opted him along with Samphan into his cabinet to counterbalance Rightists (notably Lon Nol) in the National Assembly. Although never more than a

“token force,” Yuon’s co-option granted him the opportunity to use his position as an elected official (both he and Samphan won seats in 1958) to put theory into practice.⁶

Hou Yuon: A Leftist Politician in King Sihanouk’s Court, 1956–1967

Although a Communist, Yuon vocally supported Sihanouk, whose neutralist, Buddhist-socialist stance had won him strong peasant support. As prime minister (elected in 1955), Sihanouk made frequent visits to China between 1956 and 1970 and met with Mao and Zhou Enlai.⁷ Such trips solidified his position that Cambodia must remain a neutral, non-aligned country.⁸ His positive impressions and genuine friendships with Mao and Zhou notwithstanding, Sihanouk remained obstinate toward genuine structural change. Yuon recognized that despite Sihanouk’s advocacy for Buddhist socialism, his PSC government was, in actuality, conservative and comprised of anti-Communist political representatives of the wealthy minority. Hard-line conservatives, the infamous right-wing “Lon Nol clique” of corrupt government officials, impeded Sihanouk’s selection of candidates for election. Sihanouk’s co-optation of his leftist critics was to counter-balance this conservative political influence in the National Assembly. Though co-opted leftists enjoyed some freedom, they were under close supervision and direction.⁹

A dynamic presence in Cambodian politics at the time, Yuon took advantage of his position, however limited, to put his dissertation’s theories into service for the people of his rural constituency, especially because the government had the power to do it. He was elected to the National Assembly controversially (he had a court case pending against him for “fomenting an illegal strike”). In elected office, he undertook a relentless political struggle for change in the agricultural sector as minister of commerce and industry, then minister of economy, between 1958 and 1963.¹⁰ Repression against leftist politicians was ruthless, yet he reached out to peasants nonetheless; in Saukong, for instance, he defended farmers against an absentee landlord’s seizure of their farmlands. But Yuon soon grew disillusioned with the democratic process. “One can no longer say anything without risk of being thrown into prison and tortured,” he remarked, and no doubt, he experienced it firsthand whenever Sihanouk launched into a tirade against him.¹¹ His disenchantment notwithstanding, Yuon supported PSC reforms in 1964, some of which included the nationalization of specific industries in the early 1960s.¹²

These reforms came into effect as protective measures for the already-strained agricultural sector, which is why Yuon was willing to endorse a united

front strategy in his Maoist political vision in *Pañhā Sahakar(ṇ)*. A guidebook for socialist transition, it urged socialist and conservative PSC branches to form a united front against US imperialism.¹³ Yuon lauded Sihanouk's neutrality and opposition to US adventurism. In particular, Yuon credited the 1964 reforms ("the royal form of nationalization") for the establishment of "means to build up the national economy in the interests of the people." Yuon still opposed the revolutionary route to rectify the peasant problem: "We must understand that class conflict should be resolved by a method that will not damage the unity of the nation against the American imperialists."¹⁴ Thus despite the likely insincerity of Yuon's pro-Sihanouk tone in *Pañhā Sahakar(ṇ)*, the work reflects his accommodationist stance of the times.

Never afraid to speak his mind, especially when in opposition to policies that hampered peasants' interests, he won reelection to the National Assembly. His Paris mentee, Khieu Samphan, also became a member of Parliament in the National Assembly. Along with Samphan and Nim, Yuon was reelected in September 1966 by a large margin (78 percent of the vote in his Kampong Cham electorate).¹⁵ Though Sihanouk had promised not to interfere in the democratic process as he did with his 1952 coup, he feared the mounting popularity of these Cambodian intellectual graduates of French universities. As part of his plan to counterbalance the political right and left, he published toxic polemics on Cambodian Communism during their campaigns, threatened to bring each member before a military tribunal, and even issued threats of execution. Yuon fled to join Pol Pot's *maquis* in 1967.¹⁶

Hu Nim: The "Most Dissolute and Dishonest Khmer Who Aids China," 1957–1967

The next Paris Group member to return (1957) but the last to receive his degree, Hu Nim worked in the Customs Department for three months and shifted his focus to politics. He reluctantly followed Yuon in joining the PSC government on 30 December 1957, recognizing that his best shot at serving as an effective politician was with Sihanouk's party. He won a seat in the National Assembly in 1958 (and again in 1962 and 1966) as a representative of a district in Kampong Cham province. He also worked for two leftist newspapers, *Cambodian Realities* (*Réalités Cambodgiennes*) and *Free People* (*Prachaechon Serī*), as well as Sihanouk's private newspaper, *The Nationalist* (*Anakjātiniyam*).

Already a leftist by his return to Cambodia in 1958, Hu Nim veered even further leftward and embraced a socialist political stance after the major opposition to Sihanouk, the Democratic Party, had dissolved in 1957. He had par-

ticipated in many PSC cabinets as undersecretary of state at the Prime Ministry (April–July 1958), Ministry of the Interior for Parliamentary Relations (July 1958–February 1959), and Ministry of Justice (February–June 1959). Irrespective of such posts, though, Nim held little authority to initiate the kind of change that his Communist contemporaries envisioned. He nevertheless developed a loyal following among his Kampong Cham constituency. In one incident, Nim sided with oppressed southern Cambodia inhabitants with ties to the Communist Khmer Worker's Party and joined a "Complaint Commission" to handle land disputes over claims and confiscations in 1965.

Through connections that he made while he worked for leftist newspapers, Hu Nim cultivated his reputation as a leftist to visit global Communist epicenters. As a representative of *Free People*, he traveled with a delegation to the Soviet Union and throughout Eastern Europe, which he said "gave the delegations a chance to see with their own eyes socialism in practice." As he recalled, "My leftist activities . . . were that the more activities I engaged in with socialist countries' embassies, especially China, North Korea, and North Vietnam's, the warmer I felt." Nim's "reputation as a leftist" preceded him, and Ho Chi Minh even promised him a warm welcome in Hanoi if he felt that his safety in Cambodia was ever in jeopardy.¹⁷

Despite the anti-leftism in Cambodian politics, Nim believed in reforming Cambodia's economy and its citizens' social welfare from within the National Assembly. He worked as secretary of state for commerce (August–October 1962) while he pursued his PhD in economics. As he recounted on his writings at this time,

I wrote extensively about the failure of economic reform in Cambodia. I had credible evidence and data to support my argument. SONEXIM [Cambodian governmental organization for private import-export], for example, had lost 700 million riel [Cambodian currency] annually in the exportation of rice since that state organization was formed. I argued that this resulted from the existing exploiting economics system and its relationships of production. I pointed out the current statistics [that] showed confiscation of land by a small number of the feudal landlords and capitalists, resulting in land shortages for farmers, tax burdens, and the losses of SONEXIM, which fell upon the workers and peasants. I concluded that negative impact of the exploiting characteristics of the current economic system would not only cause failure and plunge the country's economy into devastating crisis, but also sharpen the contradictions among workers, peasants, and feudal classes, landlords, and capitalists.¹⁸

Nim wrote extensively on what he recognized as myriad flaws under Sihanouk's leadership. Outspoken and charismatic, he pressed his fellow assembly members to cut ties with the imperialist United States, which he regarded as perpetuating rural suffering.

Hardly influential within the increasingly conservative PSC after 1966, Nim felt the pressure more than ever as Cultural Revolution enthusiasm among Cambodian Chinese had birthed a radical urban culture in the capital. Fearful that Nim and other leftists were plotting to usurp his leadership, Sihanouk resorted to rather autocratic tactics to repress Communist sympathizers with pro-China, or even China-curious, sentiments. He became suspicious of Chinese-language newspapers that declared "all Cambodian workers believed in Chairman Mao."¹⁹ The growing popularity of Mao's Little Red Book also concerned Sihanouk.²⁰ But perhaps the final straw was when his good friend Zhou Enlai called on Cambodian Chinese "to display their pride of the Cultural Revolution and their love for Chairman Mao," which spurred local Chinese to mimic Cultural Revolution-style demonstrations.²¹ After nearly a decade of regarding Mao, his good friend, as the "great venerated guide of the Cambodian people," Sihanouk now saw China's Red Guard Diplomacy as a significant disruption.²² Aware of the Beijing link to leftist intellectuals in Paris and Phnom Penh, Sihanouk demanded that China cease "meddling in internal affairs."²³

Sihanouk then turned an eye toward cleaning his own house. He fired Hu Nim from his post and severed ties with him. No longer bound by political duties, Nim developed stronger sentiments for China, North Korea, and North Vietnam and expressed his praise in the French-language Cambodian newspaper *The Dispatch (La Dépeche)*. He spent a month in China in 1965 and returned to Cambodia with the Chinese view that the Soviet Union was revisionist: "US imperialism and its stooges are not all happy to see a close friendship between Cambodia and China. But this is a good thing. Future developments will further prove the correctness of Chairman Mao Tse-tung's thesis that the East wind is prevailing over the West wind. The anti-imperialist forces of the East are bound to defeat the imperialist forces of the West."²⁴ Nim made regular visits to China and, at Beijing's urging, founded the AAKC, within which he worked first as an officer in 1964, then as president during Sihanouk's anti-left crackdown. The Cultural Revolution in China had also struck a nerve of Sihanouk's, and Cambodian radicals such as Hu Nim did not ignore this development. The former king had long ago fallen out of favor among intellectuals over his PSC government's years of corruption, anti-democratic practices, and the suppression of opposition parties (especially leftist ones).²⁵ By 1967, the political route to reforming Cambodia was a dead end.

Indeed, Sihanouk had grown paranoid by the 1966 elections, an event that signaled “the ascendancy of the Right” in Cambodian politics, because of the popularity of Yuon, Samphan, and Nim.²⁶ Sihanouk initially encouraged Cambodian youth to “become politically active” in early 1964 demonstrations, as his anti-imperialist policies had captured students’ imaginations. But as time wore on and his government’s policies strained urbanite and rural worker alike, students and activists found new heroes in ministers who devoted their careers to peasants. Yuon, Samphan, and Nim stood out as “positive role models,” particularly among Sino-Khmers.²⁷ Sihanouk’s response was to accuse China and pro-China officials of undermining his government: “At present I find that China has made a serious change because she has given up peaceful coexistence and the five principles. China had changed her policy since the Cultural Revolution. There have been a number of Khmer who aid China. . . . The most dissolute and dishonest is Hu Nim.” He then urged Nim “to go over to the other side, as Khieu Samphan and Hou Yuon had done.”²⁸ Sihanouk did not condemn Hu Nim’s comments upon his return from China, but later lambasted him publicly for his China ties.

Right-wing politicians and commercial representatives within the National Assembly, too, remained ever recalcitrant and repealed policy proposals by the Paris Group members within the National Assembly. Afterward, Yuon lost a vote of no confidence over his unwillingness to toe the Sihanouk line, which culminated in his resignation. His mentee, Samphan, lost the confidence of the assembly and government and conceded that there was nothing to salvage from an “unreformable” state.²⁹ This revelation and the frustration that many felt with the stagnant, Vietnamese-directed Cambodian Communist movement further radicalized Hu Nim.

Sihanouk’s “increasingly threatening invective” united the revolutionary and political paths into one, as anger grew toward all three leftist politicians who exposed for all to see the broken nature of the National Assembly. At a conference at Meru Terrace, Sihanouk’s diatribe against Yuon and Samphan for their supposed role in fomenting the March-April 1967 Samlaut Rebellion, which included threats against their lives, pushed them to flee to the *maquis* to join Pol Pot in the clandestine movement.³⁰ Announcement of their disappearance led many to speculate that Sihanouk had ordered their execution, which turned their loyal supporters against the former king.

The assumed executions of popular ministers Yuon, Samphan, and Nim as representatives of the marginalized prompted widespread mourning. In Kandandal province, more than fifteen thousand students gathered at temples to grieve the “martyrdom of Hou Yuon and Khieu Samphan.”³¹ To rebuff allegations that he and other leftists played a role in peasant unrest, Hu Nim reiterated

that his loyalty was to Sihanouk. Sihanouk responded by branding Nim as a Communist and pro-China sympathizer at a 30 September special meeting at Prey Totoeng High School. Hu Nim, who attended, caught Sihanouk's gaze and was then the target of the head of state's personal attack. Sihanouk said that Hu Nim "had a face like a Vietnamese or a Chinese."³² He also called him "a little hypocrite . . . a specialist in the art of being all honey on the outside and all venom inside. His voice has the tone of a monk at prayer, his words carry the scent of honey, but he hides his claws like a tiger."³³ He then urged Hu Nim to join his fellow reds in the countryside, which he did in October.³⁴ Thus began the legend of the "Three Ghosts": ostracized yet popular leftist ministers who reappeared in 1970 as leaders of the Communist Party of Kampuchea.³⁵

The stage was now set for a two-pronged attack. The first prong was from the revolutionary route, where Pol Pot had worked since 1953 as a covert operative in the countryside-based Cambodian Communist movement. The other was from the now-fleeing Hou Yuon and Hu Nim, who had steadily built their reputations as leftist politicians and earned a strong following among the disaffected inhabitants of their ridings and urban-based radical intellectuals. Both men could marshal their collective charisma and popularity to rally new recruits to the Communist movement's cause and rebel against Sihanouk's government.

The Revolutionary Route: Pol Pot Becomes Brother Number One

Before Yuon and Nim had undertaken their political routes to reform, the career revolutionary, Pol Pot, was the first Paris Group member to return to Cambodia and join the clandestine movement. Upon his 1953 return from France, he worked as a schoolteacher at Lycée Chamrœun Vichea in Phnom Penh, linked with Vietnamese Communists in eastern Cambodia, and was active in the KPRP and its legal front organization, the Pracheachon. Pham Van Ba, a Vietnamese cadre in charge of Pol Pot's cell, recalled that Hanoi approved of Pol Pot's participation because of his PCF membership. Pol Pot joined the KPRP urban committee and became secretary in a regional party cell. The Vietnamese Communists, concerned primarily with their own struggle against the French, wanted to ensure stability in Cambodia. They subordinated the KPRP to Sihanouk and dramatically reduced its activity. However, by the end of the decade, the KPRP led by Son Ngoc Minh (a.k.a. Achar Mean, 1920–1972) and included Pol Pot's mentor, KPRP founder and general secretary Tou Sa-

mouth (a.k.a. Achar Sok, 1915–1962), was stagnant. Pol Pot soon lost patience and sought to take an alternative route to seizing power.³⁶

Their ranks decimated (90% of the urban and rural revolutionary forces were killed or arrested, or had recanted or surrendered), the KPRP revised its strategy at a secret congress from 28–30 September 1960 in a Phnom Penh railway station that shaped the party for the next fifteen years.³⁷ The secret congress represented a “rectification campaign” in that future party leaders downplayed party history before Pol Pot’s involvement in the movement, and in an exemplary act of historical revisionism, recognized 1960 as the official founding date of the party.³⁸ Twenty-one Cambodian Communists attended, whereupon participants renamed the KPRP the WPK. Although not in attendance with Pol Pot at the 1960 secret congress, Yuon, Samphan, and Nim had excelled in the party’s urban committee (in secret, as all three held posts in the National Assembly) and seized control of the WPK’s Central Committee that year. Pol Pot, Yuon, and Nim (president of the State Presidium; Samphan was then under arrest) ultimately adopted a strategy of “combined political and armed struggle” in developing a revolutionary army.³⁹

Pol Pot seized this opportunity to jump-start his rise to party leadership. He won support by giving surety that his assessment of Cambodia’s present situation and strategy for political struggle ought to form the basis of a national-democratic revolution against Sihanouk. He urged, “Our own experiences taught us that we must adhere to the principles of independence, national sovereignty, and self-reliance, basing ourselves on the experiences of our own revolutionary movement, in order to determine our concrete political line.”⁴⁰ The WPK resolved its long-standing issues of determining its strategic line of the national-democratic revolution, finalizing its constitution, and electing Central Committee members. By the 1963 party congress, Pol Pot was WPK general secretary. He won popularity among his committee members because he defended the party line that Cambodian Communists should pursue their agenda first and have their own “special policy” on matters of revolutionary struggle, theory, and tactics.⁴¹ Pol Pot, Yuon, and Nim initiated party operations and established a youth corps, or “secret defense units,” whose responsibility was to safeguard cadres from anti-Communist task forces.⁴² Sihanouk, meanwhile, tried to lure Pol Pot out into the open and warn him that the urban-based movement must abandon its plans by naming him as one of thirty-four subversives that he wished to join the PSC government.⁴³ Pol Pot fled to Kratie and Kampong Cham, and for the next seven years he and his cadres set up “makeshift camps” in east and northeast Cambodia, where they prepared for a “peasant revolution” against Sihanouk (see figure 5.1).⁴⁴



FIGURE 5.1. The Third Congress of the Communist Party of Kampuchea, Kompong Thom province, 1971. Pol Pot is seated in the front row (*center*). Photograph courtesy of the Documentation Center of Cambodia, Phnom Penh.

But how did French-educated Cambodian elites with fairly limited rural connections at the time break from Hanoi and launch a nationwide insurgency? The answer presented itself when Pol Pot visited Beijing: the Cambodian Communists would pursue a Maoist people's war strategy to swallow the cities from the countryside. This was no small task. In a country where peasants so revered Sihanouk, recruitment required the renamed CPK (in 1966) to rework its strategy from the ground up. Party leaders would have to make Maoism *speak* to peasants, who for too long had been an afterthought for Cambodian political leaders. This stage of normative adaptation in the expanded traveling theory model thus consisted of planting traveling ideas firmly in Cambodian society, or at least enough of it to propel the CPK to power. Peasant unrest in Battambang province provided such an opportunity.

Normative Adaptation and the Cambodian Civil War

Before a revolution could begin, the CPK—which by 1967 had the charismatic Hou Yuon and Hu Nim in its rural base areas—had to penetrate peasant soci-

ety so that its vision could speak to local grievances and mobilize them against Sihanouk. This was no small order for a movement that had only recently chosen Paris-educated elite leftists as leaders. As chapter 3 discussed, the CPK's normative adaptation of Maoism began with Pol Pot's return from Beijing in 1966 as a faith Maoist and the subsequent arrival of his bureaucratic Maoist colleagues in the *maquis*. The flight of the leftist, Paris-educated group to the countryside brought an intellectual component to the fledgling CPK, as these men had adapted Maoism on paper as a *fit* for Cambodia while in Paris. The key to success, then, was for CPK leaders to speak in a political language of traditional society and a rational-bureaucratic language of modernizing states, as Mao had done with his Sinification of Marxism-Leninism. Leaders had to synthesize new and old for their radical ideas in a foreign vocabulary to resonate with their base. Growth in CPK support stemmed from its peasant outreach, which consisted of efforts to make its ideology speak to rural cleavages and everyday grievances.

The Samlaut Rebellion signaled the beginning of the Cambodian Communist movement to seize power, even though Pol Pot and his colleagues played no direct role in fomenting it.⁴⁵ Its capitalization on rural problems, about which they had theorized in Paris and fought for from political or revolutionary posts, allowed them to penetrate peasant society despite their elite origins. Sihanouk certainly helped in this regard. Peasants were "reluctant" to involve themselves in a mass movement after independence, but frustration over living conditions and a widening gap between rich and poor, urban and rural, evolved from a passive association of government (*raajkā*) with corruption (*bukraluoy*) in the early 1960s into revolt.⁴⁶ Several campaigns throughout the 1960s, including the resettlement of landless peasants in Battambang and the exploitative establishment of a lucrative rice export industry that benefited only merchants (*ramassage du paddy*), had worsened many peasants' lot.⁴⁷

The CPK recognized rural plight and sought to "give leadership to the movement" and, per Pol Pot's recollection, "suspended temporarily the armed struggle in Battambang until the whole country could complete its preparations."⁴⁸ As he recalled further, "In Battambang Province in March-April 1967 an armed uprising took place. . . . However, at that time our Party asked that this be postponed for a while to examine and sum up the state of the contradictions and the possibility of the use of arms."⁴⁹ The people, he insisted, had started it, as the CPK Central Committee "had not yet decided on a nationwide armed insurrection. The people in Battambang did it first, since the movement of the peasants' struggle was indefensibly fluid."⁵⁰ It did not matter who was responsible for the Samlaut Rebellion. Its significance lay in the fact that it allowed the CPK to capitalize on peasants to propel its Communist

movement forward. As the Samlaut Rebellion bled into the Cambodian Civil War (1968–1975), the two strands of Pol Pot's faith Maoism and the bureaucratic Maoism of former politicians Yuon and Nim combined into a cohesive Cambodian Maoism under Pol Pot's leadership to guide the CPK mobilization of peasants.

The Second Indochina War and the fallout of the US secret bombings of Cambodia during Operation Menu (18 March 1969–26 May 1970) also played their part. The CPK received a significant boost when in 1970 the deposed Sihanouk, who was in exile in Beijing after Lon Nol's bloodless coup established the Khmer Republic (1970–1975), lent his support to the CPK (see figure 5.2).⁵¹ As Pol Pot elaborates in a particularly Maoist fashion:

We proceeded according to the line that we traced for ourselves already. We needed to keep the principal contradictions in sight at all times. The principal contradictions were with imperialism and the feudal, landlord system, which we had to combat. As to the secondary contradictions, they had to be resolved by reciprocal concessions that allowed the union of all the forces against imperialism, particularly American imperialism, and the system of the feudalists, landlords, and reactionary compradors. . . . Our policy had to be correct. . . . We had to make sure they [peasants] could understand those reasons. It was equally important for our policy to conform with their interests for them to give us their support. We talked to them, had meetings with them. Sometimes they agreed with us, sometimes they did not. We came back again and again. First they did not see the true nature of American imperialism. But over time, they came to view it increasingly clearly and united with us to combat it, to win independence, peace, and neutrality.⁵²

The CPK's approach to recruiting peasants shared much in common with Mao's approach during the CCP's war against the Japanese and against the GMD during the Chinese Civil War. As Mao mobilized peasants on a range of grievances and exploited every possible cleavage to build popular support, so too did the CPK, whose cadres lived alongside the people to better "serve them heart and soul."⁵³ Both assessed their countries as backward, semicolonial, and semifeudal states that bore the brunt of an agonizing war of imperialist aggression, and carried confidence in persevering against all odds by way of self-reliance and the people's indomitable revolutionary spirit. For the CPK as with the CCP, it was necessary that the national revolution base itself in prevailing "concrete conditions" (*réalités concrètes*).⁵⁴

To sell its Maoist vision to Cambodians, the CPK pitched it to ordinary people in a way that, at once, tapped into local frustrations and framed a vi-



FIGURE 5.2. Head of State Norodom Sihanouk (*center*) standing with Communist Party of Kampuchea ministers Hu Nim (*right*) and Khieu Samphan (*left*) during his 1973 inspection tour of the liberated zone. From a special issue of *China Pictorial*, no. 6, 1973. *Public domain*.

sion of a modern nation. This meant that it ought to spark “class ardor and fury” among workers and peasants by marshaling their Maoist class analysis into something that “tapped into preexisting feelings of dissatisfaction, unrest, anger, and spite.” The goal was to instill in peasants a revolutionary political consciousness.⁵⁵ The party seized the opportunity to portray itself as the genuine representative of workers and peasants with radio broadcasts and speeches. During the party’s struggle against Sihanouk’s right-wing deposor, Lon Nol, it broadcast via secret radio its devotion to the workers and peasants.⁵⁶ “In Cambodia’s history of struggle,” a May 1971 broadcast stated, “Cambodian workers and peasants constituted a basic force in which Cambodian workers were always the most advanced, most valiant, and most active vanguard.”⁵⁷ This proclamation represents one of the earliest and few pieces of remaining evidence of CPK avowal of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Speeches on the front lines or in the camps were equally effective, especially when given by the party’s charismatic intellectual thrust. CPK candidate member Ith Sarin remembers that at a 10 May 1972 mass meeting in Kat Phloulk primary

school in Tonle Bati, “Mr. Hou Yuon gave a two-hour speech [that] was much applauded.”⁵⁸ Yuon’s popularity among peasants stemmed from his advocacy for the expansion of real cooperatives to the whole country and for them to be locally run.

The official CPK line dictated that upon seizing state power, the party would establish “new relations of production” to end socioeconomic inequality. Its “structural reorganization and indoctrination” would also penetrate rural society and turn ordinary people into extraordinary revolutionaries.⁵⁹ Pol Pot stressed that the principal contradiction was between landlords and the peasants, and the solution lay in the CPK’s program of “independence-mastery” (independence from foreign intervention in domestic affairs; *Aekarājy Mcās’kār*). CPK leaders then carried out “intensive agitation work” among peasants, which entailed organizing them into “patriotic peasants’ associations” and document reading groups.⁶⁰ Through this, the party hoped to feed peasant hatred of corrupt urbanites, evil feudal lords, and because of the residue effects of the ongoing war in neighboring Vietnam, American imperialists.

Party promises to restructure Cambodia’s relations of production to destroy feudalism and end peasant and worker exploitation convinced many to support the CPK. Party leaflets concentrated on succinct, simplified descriptions of the core themes of the dissertations by Yuon, Samphan, and Nim. One leaflet explained to peasants that feudalists and capitalist enemies “live in affluence at the expense of the working class and the masses,” who “live in misery, bled by them.”⁶¹ An issue of the party newspaper *Revolutionary Youth* (*Yuvajan Yuvanārī Paṭivatt*) identified these same classes as regarding rural youths as merely a “source from which they can suck out their interests in the most delicious manner and as a major source of strength to perpetuate their oppression and protect their treasonous state power.”⁶²

The CPK also claimed (falsely) that it was reaching out to Buddhist monks as a link between periphery and core, spiritual and mundane, in positing the “Organization” (*Angkar*) as a “substitute” for the *Sangha*, Khmer society’s pre-eminent moral authority.⁶³ Despite dehumanizing invective toward monks in party slogans, CPK leaders such as Ieng Sary praised monks in leaflets as “the only literates” and recognized their appeal among peasants as a cultural nexus of power in the countryside. Cambodia’s history, Sary notes, was replete with “heroic feats against colonial rule creditable to the ‘achars,’ who are former Buddhist monks. . . . In our revolutionary war of national and popular liberation, they take an active part in the mobilization of the patriotic forces. . . . The Buddhist monks fight stubbornly out of ardent patriotism.”⁶⁴ Most certainly against their collective wills, Cambodia’s orders of Buddhist monks were in Phnom Penh on 17 April 1975 to announce via radio broadcast that they

were “preparing the country” for a return to “easy” times. The chief of the Mohanikey Order, the Venerable Huot Tat, asked soldiers to “put down your guns” for peace.⁶⁵ Monks’ calls for peace joined with the party’s positioning of itself as the voice of the poor to give the CPK the appearance of legitimacy in Cambodia’s rice regions.

Besides political indoctrination and politicization, the CPK leadership infused its Maoism with the Paris Group’s personal charisma and couched a high-modernist vision in national peculiarities. Characteristic of the Leninist Party per Jowitt’s description, the CPK depended on a largely peasant base with an exclusively elite intellectual leadership. The main pillar of Cambodian Maoism was the *Angkar* (“Organization”; a.k.a. *Angkar Paṭivatt*, “Revolutionary Organization”), a name that CPK leaders used in March 1971 to downplay party revolutionary leadership in favor of stressing collective involvement.⁶⁶ *Angkar* constituted the CPK combination of its high-modernism, Communism, and imaginings of Khmer rural society “to idealize a new potent center.”⁶⁷ The name *Angkar* itself held significance: “*Angkar* . . . [means] ‘organization’ but includes an array of connotations not captured by the English word. *Angkar* is derived from the Pali term *anga*, meaning ‘a constituent part of the body, a limb, member,’ and proximately from the Khmer term [*ang*], which has the primary meaning of ‘body, structure, physique; limb of the body’ but is also used to refer to ‘mana-filled’ objects such as monks, royalty, religious statuary, or Siva lingas. . . . Thus *Angkar* can be properly glossed as ‘the organization,’ but it also connotes a structure that orders society, a part-whole relation . . . and an organic entity that is infused with power.”⁶⁸ The party’s use of *Angkar* allowed it to position itself as a benevolent organization with a deep cultural and historical link to Cambodia rather than a foreign and alien import. At the center of the powerful, human-will-driven yet secretive CPK machine was the charismatic-impersonal *Angkar*, which cared for all as a national paterfamilias. Party slogans reveal that the CPK leadership “sold” itself as such: “The *Angkar* is the mother and father of all young children, as well as all young men and women” (*Angkar jā mātāpitā rabas’ kumārā kumārī niñ yuvajan yuvanārī*) and “The *Angkar* tenderly looks after you all, brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers” (*Angkar thnāk’thnam paṇpaūn bukmae*) lend credence to this self-perception.⁶⁹

After seizing power on 17 April 1975, the CPK leadership promoted the party only as the mysterious yet omnipotent and omnipresent *Angkar*. Through slogans, speeches, and sermons, CPK propagandists stressed its benevolence and urged all to love it as they would their families.⁷⁰ Although the intention was to establish a “relationship of personal dependency” between itself and its constituent peasant base, the CPK’s effort to posit itself as, at once, an

impersonal yet all-loving organization *and* “a personalized institution that watches movies and can be spoken to unless it is ‘busy working’” mirrors Mao’s dual endeavors appropriately.⁷¹

Evidence also suggests that although not sharing the same conceptual terrain as Maoism in the CPK’s thinking, “existing local frames of knowledge,” notably Buddhism, were used by propagandists to relate “external and unfamiliar ideology to their cadres and the masses.” Most CPK cadres were “only nominally acquainted with Marxist ideology” and were still far more *au fait* with Buddhist norms and practices. Allusions to Buddhism in slogans and songs drew people in and established codes of conduct, notably in terms of “subjecting oneself to self-scrutiny” (a comfortable fit with Mao’s principle of self-criticism, *ziwo piping*).⁷² One such example is the CPK slogan “Criticize yourself first, then punish yourself if you committed an error” (*dhvœ khustruv ditēn kāsān khluon tøy khluonaeñ truv tāk’danḍkamm khluonaeñ*). CPK propagandists shone the spotlight on those who needed to self-criticize, notably Buddhist monks, the “tapeworms” (*lok sangha jābrūn saṅgam*), and “parasites” (*lok sangha jājan pañoe ka’aek*). Such slogans were common during the Civil War before the CPK takeover in 1975.⁷³

Khmer Buddhist notions of face and honor also figured prominently in propaganda and practice. In line with Cambodian notions of revenge informed by Buddhism, some cadres meted out punishments on offenders disproportionately to save face, whereas other cadres sought to preserve or gain face for their own advancement within the party.⁷⁴ Slogans such as “Your heart is like Devadatt’s, your mouth like a *tevada*” (*citt jā devdatt māt’jā devtā*) refer at once to the story of a cruel prince in Buddha’s life and celestial beings in Buddhist mythology.⁷⁵ Others positioned cadres as morally superior figures whom prospective recruits ought to emulate: “One of the most important concepts in the Khmer worldview is that good and evil in the cosmic order are held in perpetual balance. Each must exist, so neither ever completely and conclusively triumphs over the other. Existence is above all *ordered*. . . . In the Khmer Rouge years, evil did seem to triumph.”⁷⁶ The goal, ultimately, was to render good and evil inseparable from the *Angkar* and posit party members as “morally superior beings equivalent to Buddhist monks.” After all, the Cambodian Communist movement traces its origins in part to Buddhist nationalism as spearheaded by a Buddhist lay preacher (Son Ngoc Minh) and a monk (Tou Samouth).

However, after the CPK’s 1960 reorganization it began to distance itself from what its leaders regarded as a “reactionary religion.”⁷⁷ Party calls for its followers to cleanse themselves internally through “self-surrender of the individual to his or her environment” composed part of the CPK “revolutionary

ethos.”⁷⁸ Self-control and mindfulness provided additional cultural norms with which to shape how the CPK wanted its cadres and people to behave in owing their complete allegiance to the party. Thus, Buddhist values were less a useful way to ground abstract Marxist-Leninist ideas than a means by which peasants could relate to and admire the kind of austere devotion to purpose that professional Communist revolutionaries exhibited. Revolutionaries effectively posited themselves as revolutionary monks and marketed to peasants the possibility of attaining that same level of transcendence by joining the party and movement.

Once the Communists took Phnom Penh in 1975, “Democratic Kampuchea” was to be governed as one large cooperative or mutual work team, which Hou Yuon and Hu Nim proposed (in lesser terms) in their dissertations. The whole country was to be state-centric so that it could cast off the shackles of foreign exploitation. As Ieng Sary described midway through the CPK movement, the prices of goods “are set according to the principle that business transactions should benefit the population, the resistance, and the traders who must not seek exorbitant profits at the expense of others. To facilitate price control, we have been extending the network of supply and marketing cooperatives. All these measures have made it possible to stabilize the prices of commodities.”⁷⁹ Unproductive industries would not remain—only rice and water, the Cambodian lifeblood that coursed through the veins from its beating heart, the Mekong River Delta.

Though some Cambodians recognized Khieu Samphan and his colleagues Yuon and Nim, by the 1970s no one in the country could identify the CPK’s leader because the party ruled collectively and in secrecy. The party’s omnipresence, as it displayed through the total supervision of its people, actually augmented its central authority.⁸⁰ Through this combination of the CPK leadership’s personal charisma, contemporary norms, and Maoist analyses from the intellectual thrust’s dissertations, the party portrayed itself as led by peasant visionaries despite its leadership’s elite origins.

Additional factors that aided the CPK in penetrating the rural society include Vietnamese protection and military assistance until at least 1972, Sihanouk’s endorsement after the bloodless 1970 Lon Nol coup, and the establishment of liberated zones and cooperatives in Cambodia’s south and southwest, which expanded from 1974 onward and in which the CPK oversaw an extensive propaganda campaign.⁸¹

First, when CPK–North Vietnamese relations were “warm,” Vietnamese support was secured by Nuon Chea (“Brother Number Two,” 1926–present), a man “already closely cooperating with Pol Pot” and someone Le Duan regarded as “our man” and “personal friend.” Vietnamese deputy foreign

minister Nguyen Co Thach recalled that Nuon Chea requested, and Hanoi delivered, the “liberation” of nearly a quarter of Cambodian lands by expelling government forces from these areas before the CPK moved in to expand the liberated zones.⁸² The CPK then expanded its people’s war, as Pol Pot recounted in a 1977 speech:

We made use of . . . people’s war. . . . We would attack the enemy no matter where. We could lead many large- and small-scale attacks. This was our work of continual mobilization and training of the people. Thanks to the use of all these forms of struggle, we built up our forces. If we had struggled only in the countryside, we would have lacked forces in the cities. If we, instead, fought only in the cities, we would not have had strength in the countryside. Thus, we struggled both in the countryside and the cities, both openly and secretly, legally and illegally. . . . Guerrilla warfare was waged everywhere, the guerrilla could attack anywhere. We could mobilize all the people to attack the enemy without waiting for the regular units. This is what proves the effectiveness of our line of people’s war based on guerrilla warfare, which was invincible. Guerrilla units of 50,000 fighters in the whole country attacked all over without letting up. Everyone, without exception, no matter where they were, looked for some way to wipe out the enemy. If every group of three guerrillas or unit of 10 guerrillas succeeded in killing or wounding one enemy soldier per day, with 50,000 guerrillas in the whole country, this would make a considerable number of enemy soldiers put out of action each day. This was how the enemy forces were continually weakened by our guerrillas. We had faith in our line of people’s war. We had faith not only in arms, but in our line of people’s war. . . . Our people’s war was invincible.⁸³

Further CPK requests for Vietnamese aid followed in 1974 when Hanoi ensured it “with no strings attached,” though Vietnamese leaders admitted later that this decision and the one not to remove Pol Pot were mistakes.⁸⁴ The CPK Central Committee disavowed of the Vietnamese that year when victory was nearly assured and further assistance no longer necessary. Pol Pot thus declared that all gains during this time had been because of the CPK’s people’s war, national democratic revolution, and successful peasant mobilization.⁸⁵

The second factor in explaining the CPK penetration into the countryside was its endorsement by its erstwhile enemy, Sihanouk. Lon Nol’s bloodless coup in 1970 forced Sihanouk to scramble for allies afar. Chinese leaders wished to prevent Cambodia from suffering the same fate as South Vietnam by restoring Sihanouk to power. Beijing also wished to support the CPK’s armed

struggle to counterbalance Soviet-friendly Hanoi in the region.⁸⁶ Sihanouk explained his endorsement of the CPK as follows: "I had chosen not to be with the Americans or the Communists. . . . It was Lon Nol who obliged me to choose between them."⁸⁷ On 23 March 1970, the CPK and Sihanouk formed the multiclass National United Front of Kampuchea (FUNK) at Beijing's urging, which paved the way for the CPK to market itself to recruits as a national front protecting Cambodian sovereignty.⁸⁸ CPK guerrillas constituted FUNK's military personnel, whereas the liberated areas formed the Chinese-backed and Chinese-recognized GRUNK. Its representatives, Khieu Samphan chief among them, received Sihanouk in 1973 when he flew to Hanoi, and escorted him to GRUNK areas via the Ho Chi Minh Trail.⁸⁹

The FUNK united front enabled the CPK to capitalize on Sihanouk's reverence among Cambodians to recruit new cadres and develop their power base for expansion. Many Cambodians subsequently lent their support to the CPK movement; in Kampong Cham, for instance, residents supported the CPK because they hoped that the movement would restore Sihanouk to power.⁹⁰ The CPK had appointed him in a ceremonial position as "Chief of State for Life" in 1975, but before that, CPK cadres drew recruits in through effective propaganda campaigns.⁹¹ As 703rd Division cadre and S-21 interrogator Prak Khan describes:

In late 1973, the "Khmer Rouge Front" came and organized the village chiefs, sub-district chiefs, and militia chairmen, and campaigned for the people to join the revolution to oppose the coup by Lon Nol. Ta Phoeung of the Bati district committee [District 56 of the Southwestern Zone] proclaimed that this was Samdech Preah Sihanouk's revolutionary movement that had been created to oppose Lon Nol. We struggled to demand power for Samdech Sihanouk, demand the rights of the people, to attack and dismantle the feudalism regime, and not allow them to demand taxes from us. I believed the propaganda and volunteered to become a Khmer Rouge soldier.⁹²

Propaganda and education methods allowed the CPK to expand, however gradually, its liberated zones in 1974 and turn the tide on Lon Nol. Sihanouk's popularity, however, concerned CPK leaders. Loyalty to a reactionary monarch was not uniform throughout the liberated zones. In CPK military chief Ta Mok's (1926–2006) Southwest Zone, for instance, CPK cadres "forsook all allegiance to Sihanouk in late 1971" and in early 1972 initiated a purge of Vietnamese cadres.⁹³

The CPK's "indoctrination machine" and its leaders' charisma also attracted recruits to the movement. Party propaganda outlets included "national party

publications, the education system, and the Party's various youth organizations."⁹⁴ Harsh repression of activists pushed students and youth to radicalize, receive CPK propaganda more openly, and then join the party ranks.⁹⁵ On 9 September 1970, GRUNK Minister of Commerce, Rural Reform, and Cooperatives Hou Yuon, Minister of Propaganda and Information Hu Nim, and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defense Khieu Samphan appealed to monks and students to "attack and liberate the entire country" in a joint communiqué that lambasted the Khmer Republic as an "incapable" and "imperialist regime."⁹⁶ They also called for Phnom Penh's inhabitants to flee the city to the liberated zones and take up arms against the Khmer Republic.

Those in the countryside, the CPK urged, must leave their families and fight alongside FUNK.⁹⁷ As 143rd Battalion, 12th Division veteran Suos Thy recalled, "I dared to abandon everything for the nation and the revolutionary people and Party with no conditions, and I strove to carry out the missions assigned me by the Party with all my heart. The reason I joined was because *Angkar* at the village and sub-district level trained me politically and emotionally and enlightened me, and so I had a hatred for the imperialists, feudalists, and capitalists who had invaded, oppressed, killed, and bombarded the people with such extreme barbarity. I saw clearly the feudalist class and the capitalists who were oppressing and sucking the blood of the people."⁹⁸ CPK leaders played their part. From 25 November to 15 December 1972, Khieu Samphan visited Cambodia's northwestern provinces, an extensive trip that one member of his troupe described favorably: "In the liberated zones, the people are strongly satisfied with the revolution. The children saw us coming from a distance, ran up to ask to shake our hands, and declared their determination to join the revolutionary army and attack the Americans."⁹⁹ In his capacity as CPK mouthpiece, Yuon delivered an hour-long address on 30 September 1974 proclaiming the CPK movement had been "successful both inside and outside the country, and was graded the number-three movement in the world, after China and Albania . . . [and] allied countries, like China and Korea, [have] come to learn from us."¹⁰⁰ In both cases, CPK Central Committee members marshaled their popularity and reputations as peasant-friendly politicians to the party's advantage.

Third, the CPK established its own institutions to govern civilians, cells, and other party organizations at the village level to recruit and mobilize peasants. Region-level cadres handled the organization of Vietnamese- and CPK-seized liberated villages and subdistricts, in which they disseminated CPK propaganda and oversaw new recruit education. The party also instituted mutual aid teams (*Krumpravās'tai*) on 20 May 1973 that by April 1975 organized "most of the population" into units to achieve "real prosperity." Mutual aid teams, then

“low-and-high-level cooperatives” (*Sahakara(n) Kamritdāp/khas*), served the two official functions of supplying CPK forces against the “US imperialists” (Lon Nol’s forces) and absorbing the urbanites after liberation. Their great accomplishment was realizing many of the proposals of Hou Yuon and Hu Nim in practice: cooperatives established “effective control (not ownership) of land, stock, and equipment [which] remained in peasant hands, usury and rental payments were abolished, and taxation was relatively light.”¹⁰¹

Conclusion

Previous chapters showed that, arguably, Mao of the 1920s–1940s was “Opposition Mao”—that is, his focus was resistance against the GMD and obtaining state power. Mao of the 1960s, however, was “Socialist Governance Mao.” In the same way that Mao sought to make revolutionary governance the cornerstone of Cultural Revolution-era China, so too were Pol Pot, Hou Yuon, and Hu Nim attempting to understand, adapt, codify, and then implement that theoretical framework in Cambodia.

A comprehensive genealogy of the CPK’s Maoism from its origins in Paris to the streets of Cambodia’s cities to the rice paddies of the countryside is a long and winding road. At once, this road stares backward to account for social experiences (impact/relational reception) and forward to connect radical ideology to its brutal implementation. The CPK Maoists took different routes to their radicalization, but each showed, in varying degrees and at different times, a commitment to alter the nation’s course without total erasure (practical adaptation): Pol Pot through democratic reform in his 1952 essay, Hou Yuon and Hu Nim through peasant outreach as they described in their writings. These men did not agree monolithically in the same kind of Maoism either. Yuon and Nim, for instance, implicitly favored Mao’s emphasis on socioeconomic analysis and Yan’an canon as they sought to reconcile it with Mao’s post-1949 writings and beliefs in their intellectual adaptations. Their aim was to implement a relatively pragmatic form of revolution based on a united front. Both tried and failed to integrate their dissertations’ proposals with Sihanouk’s government (practical adaptation). Yuon and Nim ultimately joined Pol Pot in 1967 to initiate the production of Cambodian Maoism (normative adaptation).

Fresh from his trips to China, Pol Pot cared little for investigation or Mao’s dense texts. His sojourn in China at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution made him a faith Maoist, and he based his approach to Maoism less on pragmatic empiricism and more on personal charisma and unquestioned

leadership. Pol Pot's return from China before the outbreak of the Samlaut Rebellion coincided with the Paris Group's break with Sihanouk, and soon joined their respective takes on Maoism together to form the ideological basis of the CPK's armed struggle. Upon joining Yuon and Nim in political struggle in 1967, all three had reached a stage of theoretical development where they ceased learning from Maoism and worked full time on developing their own theory of revolution. That is not to say that Maoism and China were no longer important, but that they no longer devoted significant thought work to reading texts. Now, they were taking the Maoism with which they had engaged and put it into practice. In so doing, they developed a new approach that they rooted in Cambodian realities. Pol Pot's faith Maoism, for one, signaled the beginning of his transformation from failed student to "Brother Number One," a name that he held before his 1977 "big reveal" that the *Angkar* was the CPK, and he its mysterious leader.

But before the Paris Group of Cambodian intellectuals went down in infamy as ministers—and in the cases of Pol Pot and Khieu Samphan, leaders—of a genocidal Maoist social experiment, they were passionate students who cared genuinely about liberating their homeland from exploitation, identifying systemic socioeconomic problems and working toward concrete solutions. Yuon and Nim, in particular, had tremendous acumen when it came to peasant grievances because they had lived that life before. Pol Pot and Samphan were charismatic orators who had proved their worth either politically or on the revolutionary front. The realization of their Maoist vision after 17 April 1975, the day that the *Angkar* seized Phnom Penh, was rather tragically the beginning of a four-year project that set the downtrodden country back several decades and cost nearly a third of its people their lives.

CHAPTER 6

“We Must Combine Theory and Practice”

The Implementation of Cambodia’s

Maoist Vision, 1975–1979

Our CCP, if it makes mistakes, it must take responsibility and fix them. We want to raise a point with you: do not strive to be more active to get to the final stage of Communism. You want to be careful, because on the road to Communism there are many dangerous steps. . . . If you ignore prudent and thoughtful methods, then you will certainly bring a catastrophe upon the people. . . . Our China committed this mistake, and I want to advise you [not to repeat it].

—Zhou Enlai, 26 August 1975

Theory overflows to your ankles; concrete actions you find at the treetops (*driṣṭi hīer ṭal’kaeñ aekā jeak’ staen nauloe cunjhoe*).

—DK worksite slogan (irreverent)

Previous chapters examined how the Cambodian intellectuals who constituted the CPK’s intellectual thrust rose to political relevancy, and tracked their transformation from apolitical students to leftist politicians and revolutionaries. This chapter explores the mechanisms of the CPK in power. The Cambodian Communists’ seizure of state power was unexpected; the “great victory of the Cambodian people,” as Mao called it, came with complicating factors that impeded the party’s implementation of its political vision.¹ Obstacles ranged from intraparty disunity over how to govern the now-named Democratic Kampucha, to dealing with Phnom Penh’s wartime-swollen population (from fewer than six hundred thousand residents before 1970 to nearly two million after 1970), to exposing “enemies” among the people.

This chapter argues that the same political processes of consolidation, economic reconfiguration, and social transformation that characterized Mao's implementation of his thought in China marked the Cambodian case. It draws from confidential CPK Central Committee (a.k.a. Party Center) documents, periodicals, and official pronouncements to track these processes in the CPK's implementation of its vision. The chapter's sections are guided by three features from Jowitt's analysis of status-like features of the Leninist Party, which comprise parts of the implementation stage in the expanded traveling theory model: (1) a tendency to distinguish between insiders (members of the party) and outsiders ("enemies"); (2) the placement of power in the hands of cadres whose central personal role is emphasized during initial developmental phases of Leninist regimes; and (3) an emphasis on the protection of belonging to a closed, well-bounded group.²

The CPK's consolidation began with the dissolution of a collective leadership that had led the party to power. Several party members became "outsiders" seemingly overnight, and the "Pol Pot Group" (Pol Pot, Ieng Sary, Nuon Chea, Khieu Samphan, Son Sen, and Vorn Vet) steadily consolidated leadership with their ouster. Pol Pot's 20 December 1976 "Microbes Speech" (a.k.a. "Sickness in the Party") and revision of the party's founding date from 1951 to 1960 signaled his rise to *primus inter pares*, then to uncontested party leadership, and, finally, to targeting and killing "enemies burrowing from within" (those who disagreed with his policies).³

The three variables are also present and overlap in the CPK's economic reconfiguration and social transformation (revolutionary perpetuation). The "Super Great Leap Forward" (*mahā lotphloh*; the nickname for its four-year plan to build socialism) was a rapid, agriculture-driven industrialization program that the CPK launched to "leap from a people's democratic revolution to a socialist revolution, and quickly build socialism."⁴ Next came the CPK's social transformation. French Catholic missionary to Cambodia, Francois Ponchaud, coined this stage of the CPK's implementation of its ideology as "Year Zero" because of what he held was the party's aim to outdo the French Revolution's "Year One" (*An 1*) of the revolutionary calendar. For the CPK, social transformation entailed a total restructuring of Cambodian rural life. Not unlike the SEM in Maoist China, new emphases on "cleanliness" in terms of politics, organization, ideology, economy, and on following the peasant example were central to this overhaul of Cambodian society in the pursuit of a pure socialism.

The three phases of implementation and its underlying variables show how the CPK's Maoism as the party implemented it in the DK years (1975–1979) dif-

ferred significantly from its leaders' previous intellectual, practical, and normative adaptations. As the party leadership coalesced around Pol Pot in 1976, the nature of party politics, thinking, and policy transformed into the faith-based *Polpotism*: an indigenized “blend of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, and other influences that he adapted to the Cambodian context” that targeted *Others* and affixed “nationalist revivalism on a socialist organization.”⁵

Marked departures from Mao's implementation of his thought in China are indeed identifiable. The processes in DK sought the same goals and carried more weight than rhetorical similarity; rather, these processes were outgrowths of applying Maoist implementation to Cambodia's concrete realities. The shift to Polpotism represents the Pol Pot regime's (as it became under Pol Pot's unquestioned leadership) fundamental misunderstanding of, and unwillingness to accept, Cambodia's objective reality. Pol Pot pushed a faith Maoist agenda that he was likely to pursue irrespective of obstacles, internal opposition, or policy failures. Polpotism became the culmination of the “Kampucheanization” process. Maoism had provided a template, but Pol Pot, Yuon, and Nim all worked together in producing a new, “Kampucheanized” Maoism.⁶

But if “practice is the sole criterion of truth” (*shishi shi jianyan zhenli weiyi de biao zhun*), then the CPK showed that its Maoism was the truth and that Maoism as implemented in and exported from China was no longer the highest truth for DK. Even Kampucheanized Maoism became insufficient. Polpotism's emergence thus signaled the next stage of the indigenization of Maoism outside China. In several instances, Pol Pot's regime *rejected* Maoism in implementation not unlike Mao's own rejection of key points in Stalinism and the Soviet model of authoritarian total governance in pursuance of what Mao called a “Chinese road to socialism.” The dissolution of the Paris Group represented a violent break between Yan'an and faith Maoisms in the CPK Central Committee. Moderate ideologues were sublimated by the charismatic and, ultimately, vitriolic Pol Pot Group. By 1976 this group had established Polpotism, and its adherents formed the next incarnation of the “Organization, a small circle [that] kept its secrets.”⁷

Consolidation: Leadership, “Microbes,” and the Rise of Brother Number One

The CPK's consolidation phase preceded the seizure of state power on 17 April 1975. As CPK Central Committee secretary in 1977, Pol Pot reflected on the party's (then named the Worker's Party of Kampuchea) 1960 First

Congress. He recalled that at this First Congress, “the errors committed [in our struggle] were rectified in the course of the work to better organize, consolidate, and constantly enlarge our forces.”⁸ But after liberating “75 to 80% of the country by 1970–1971,” Central Committee members encountered the problems of increased party membership and shortages of qualified, well-trained medium- and lower-level cadres. The limits of working within the GRUNK also constrained party organization and its approach to recruitment.⁹ As full CPK membership required several years of education and training, the party opted to loosen its restrictions for new peasant recruits.¹⁰ Once in power, however, one faction’s purge of others marked intraparty politics. The CPK moved to consolidate its leadership and membership through five main events: (1) centralizing Central Committee leadership; (2) evacuating the cities; (3) reorienting party history around the leader, Pol Pot; (4) identifying enemies and dehumanizing them; and (5) crushing dissent among party leaders.¹¹

Insiders from Outsiders

On leadership, CPK minister of foreign affairs, Ieng Sary, stated that for the revolution to succeed, “it is indispensable that at each echelon there be a leadership core composed of men who are firm on principles and who know how to apply our political line in concrete national conditions creatively and with precise aims.”¹² This “leadership core” was the Paris Group, which occupied high posts in the Central Committee and, despite no party congresses between 1963 and 1971, directed CPK affairs.¹³ The Central Committee had relied on “collective leadership through committees for their territorial administrative units” (*phumipheak* for zones, *tampan* for regions) until the 1975 takeover. But the Central Committee contained competing factions with different ideas about implementing the CPK vision.¹⁴ Although the party’s official political line was Marxist-Leninist, ideological inclinations had splintered the Central Committee during the united front with Sihanouk. Largely because of the difficulty of identifying clear factional boundaries within the CPK Central Committee, factional groupings are, to some extent, imposed by scholars. The two most important of these factions because they contained the Central Committee’s highest-ranking and most influential members were: the Pol Pot group of faith Maoists (Pol Pot, Ieng Sary, Khieu Samphan, and others); and the bureaucratic Maoists (Hou Yuon, Hu Nim, and Phouk Chhay) who were prolific politicians and activist-intellectuals who had large followings among Cambodian leftists.¹⁵

The DK era did not formally begin until 1976 because the CPK spent much of its first year in power putting together a functioning administration.¹⁶ Its

Central Committee ordered all Cambodia’s district and region secretaries and regional military representatives to attend a five-day meeting to “receive the plan distributed by the Center” and, after the meeting, to go about “implement[ing] the plan.” No documents from the meeting survive, but some accounts detail the content of the 20 May 1975 meeting. The political commissar of the Third Battalion of the First Eastern Division, Sin Song, recalled that Pol Pot issued eight directives: “1) Evacuate people from all towns; 2) Abolish all markets; 3) Abolish Lon Nol regime currency and withhold the revolutionary currency [in print]; 4) Defrock all Buddhist monks and put them to work growing rice; 5) Execute all leaders of the Lon Nol regime beginning with the top leaders; 6) Establish high [superior]-level cooperatives throughout the country, with communal eating; 7) Expel the entire Vietnamese minority population; and 8) Dispatch troops to the borders, particularly the Vietnamese border.”¹⁷ Several features that characterized the CPK’s transformation of Cambodian society stand out. All Vietnamese became *personae non gratae* overnight, though most had fled the country by 1976. CPK propagandists’ differentiation of insiders (us) from outsiders (them) was also crucial for Central Committee support. The continued participation of now-distrusted veterans of the KPRP (purged by 1976), the now-ruling CPK declared, threatened to discredit Central Committee authority.¹⁸ To the Paris Group, which soon split, ex-KPRP members represented the old guard, an *ancien régime* of Communists whose past loyalty to DK’s chief rival, Vietnam, made their allegiance to the party suspect.

Before addressing the next course of action, the end of the Cultural Revolution in China and the 1976 arrest of the Gang of Four (Jiang Qing, Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan, and Wang Hongwen) signaled the CPK’s shift away from collective leadership. China’s slackened revolutionary enthusiasm and the official end of the Cultural Revolution warranted Pol Pot’s radicalism.¹⁹ Upon Pol Pot’s accession to power, Mao and his loyalists were in the throes of regenerating their Cultural Revolution by targeting bureaucracy and old institutions. Cultural Revolution-era ideas found currency in DK as a laboratory of experimentation. The CPK would abolish money, the family unit, education, cities, and social distinctions, among others.²⁰ In his capacity as minister of foreign affairs, Ieng Sary spent significant time in China and met with CCP officials overtly and covertly over matters of Chinese support and theoretical issues. As International Liaison Department of the CCP Central Committee (Zhongguo gongchandang zhongyang duiwai lianluo) Bureau VIII head Zhu Liang recounts, on such occasions “our leaders [until 1977] still told the Khmer Rouge that it was ‘well-done’ and ‘right’ to drive the people of Phnom Penh



FIGURE 6.1. Four busts of CPK general secretary and prime minister of Democratic Kampuchea Pol Pot on display inside S-21 (Tuol Sleng) Museum in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The CPK used the former school as a detention and torture center throughout the regime. *Author's photograph, November 2019.*

to the countryside. . . . We have some responsibility in that the Khmer Rouge and other 'leftist parties' practiced the ultra-leftist policies. They were also the victims of the 'Cultural Revolution.'"²¹ No wonder, then, why China's post-Cultural Revolution shift led Pol Pot to regard himself as the legitimate heir of genuine Maoism (see figure 6.1).

Absent China's support, however, some CPK figures found themselves without important international backing. Central Committee members who were once colleagues fueled disunity among leaders over correct political lines and thought. Fear among CPK leaders that the revolution was veering toward a pro-Chinese or pro-Vietnamese agenda, or that Pol Pot wanted more extreme measures that alienated more moderate Maoists Yuon and Nim, is a possible reason for the rift.²²

Characteristic of the shift away from collective leadership among the Central Committee and their comrades (Nuon Chea, Ta Mok, Vorn Vet, Son Sen, among others) was the growing secrecy among factions within the enigmatic CPK. In his book *Cambodian Character (Carit Khmer)*, Bun Chanmol reflects on the deep-seated mistrust that had marked leadership throughout Khmer history. His description of a long-standing mix of secrecy, ambition, and paranoia aptly describes the CPK Central Committee as collective leadership eroded:

From ancient times onward, Cambodian leaders have been constantly suspicious of one another. This doubt has led to . . . merciless killings between them. Those who are in the process of holding power never trust those who work with them, always fearing: “The person is inclined to quietly try to seize . . . authority! That person will try to secretly kill me to take over my position! . . . If one of his subordinates inflames his suspicions a little bit, telling the leader that a colleague or longtime friend has in fact betrayed him, the leader will find a pretext to accuse this colleague or friend of doing something bad so that the person can be killed and discarded.”²³

Indeed, in the pages of his 1977 forced “confessions,” then former CPK minister of propaganda and information, Hu Nim, defined the CPK as “Brother No. 1 and Brother No. 2,” the secret titles of Pol Pot and CPK deputy secretary Nuon Chea.²⁴ Secrecy had also been a foundational pillar of the CPK, and its existence as a Marxist-Leninist party remained a secret from the broader public until September 1977.²⁵

Indicative of shifting allegiances and leadership coalescing around particular personages was that even high-ranking leaders “remained in the dark” on policy decisions such as the order to evacuate the cities.²⁶ Pol Pot and his loyalists “directed the entire revolutionary organization” in total secrecy. Pol Pot “held the dossiers,” “controlled the ministries,” and ensured “no deviation from the line fixed by the High Organization in the name of the people.”²⁷ Now, outspoken Paris comrades Hou Yuon and Hu Nim, among others, were regarded by Pol Pot’s regime as too moderate and, ultimately, new targets for elimination.

CPK consolidation of its authority proceeded in the form of forcefully evacuating the cities and relocating all people to the countryside to work in collective farms and on irrigation canals.²⁸ In its justification of the evacuation, the Central Committee said “there was not enough food to feed the people.” But its aim was to abolish money, markets, and Buddhism and for local leaders to increase the size and scale of cooperatives so that leadership had “a more centralized character.”²⁹ The party ordered everyone out of the cities “to transform the country thoroughly at once” and outside the “breeding grounds for counterrevolution,” as the guerrillas had not fought for seven years “to take office as city councilors.”³⁰ To make such a massive undertaking feasible, the party launched a two-pronged attack to displace old mind-sets along with displaced bodies.

At a series of meetings from 20 August to 24 August 1975, the Central Committee decided to “condition the consciousness of the people so that their

thinking would become indistinguishable from the revolutionary authorities.”³¹ The CPK split society into two social classes: old/base people (rural villagers who had lived in liberated zones; *Anakmūlthān*) and new people / “17 April Group” (new urbanites and intellectuals; *Anakthmī* / *Buok Ṭap’prāmbīrmesā*).³² Party leaders believed that to consolidate most effectively, the urban evacuees must be “absorbed into collectives, with the ‘base people’ at the core, the ‘new people’ . . . on the periphery, and the CPK managing the functions of the collective.”³³ Now-emptied cities were from this moment the center from which the CPK issued its decrees.

Pol Pot as Supreme Leader

Three transformational events marked the next phase of CPK consolidation and signaled the rise of Pol Pot and Polpotism: (1) Pol Pot’s semiretirement and return to revise party history around himself, (2) his 1976 “Microbes Speech,” and (3) the elimination of Paris Group Maoists Hou Yuon and Hu Nim for voicing dissent over the party’s consolidation. On the first, Pol Pot had held the rank of CPK Central Committee secretary and Military Committee chairman since the Party’s Third Congress in September 1971. However, two days after a report of Mao’s demise on 9 September 1976 made its way to DK airwaves, he abruptly resigned “to take care of his health.”³⁴ Khieu Samphan recalled that in the “early months” it seemed to him that CPK responsibilities “weighed essentially on Pol Pot, and his health suffered from it.” One probable reason behind Pol Pot’s semiretirement was for him to draw potential enemies into the open. It is also possible that the party sacked Pol Pot and elected Nuon Chea to replace him as prime minister in 1976. Regardless, Pol Pot was not out of the CPK picture. He unseated Nuon Chea as CPK prime minister and intensified internal purges. He declared that Nuon Chea had overseen the rise of pro-Vietnam, pro-China radicals within the party, though Nuon survived and became a Polpotist mainstay. Subsequently, Samphan describes (albeit to deflect attention away from his own crimes), Pol Pot stood as “the historical leader who was never wrong when it came to making important decisions.”³⁵

Pol Pot then reoriented party history around his leadership and ideological contributions. By changing the CPK founding date to 1960 to align with its leadership’s involvement, Pol Pot and his comrades were essentially “cutting themselves off from nine years of Cambodian history (1951–1960) to which their own contributions had been ambiguous, subordinate, or nonexistent.”³⁶ As Pol Pot’s 1977 speech on party history stated, the 1950s were a decade of disorganization during which a three-front effort (legal political

organization, leftist newspapers, and the clandestine struggle) failed because of the absence of a clear-sighted political line of independence, national sovereignty, and self-reliance: “Last year we informed people attending the big meeting on 30 September 1975 that our Party was twenty-four years old. Previously, we had celebrated this day as the twentieth, twenty-first, twenty-second, and twenty-third anniversaries, right up to the twenty-fourth. Now we celebrate the sixteenth anniversary of the Party, because we are making a new numeration. What rationale is there for this? The Revolutionary Organization [*Angkar Pativatt*] has decided that from now on we must arrange the history of the Party into something clean and perfect, in line with our policies of independence and self-mastery.”³⁷ In so doing, previous Vietnamese patronage to the KPRP and Pracheachon was thrown into the dustbin of history despite the internationalist continuities that the CPK propounded openly about in the years before seizing state power. The CPK leadership now claimed authenticity and *sui generis* status over the Cambodian revolution regardless of the legitimacy of such claims. Those who still desired to celebrate the years of fraternal relations with the Vietnamese Communists became targets for purging under the leadership of Pol Pot and his loyalists Nuon Chea, Ieng Sary, and Khieu Samphan.

Pol Pot’s revised party history in his 1977 speech rendered his role in the Cambodian Communist movement inextricable and forced the party leadership to coalesce around his charismatic party and against “enemies.” To accomplish what Mao had done with Yan’an Rectification over this new party history, the CPK Party Center determined that the party must unveil itself to those in DK who had not struggled with the party before the takeover. Pol Pot’s speech did this for the first time. He announced that *Angkar* was the “just and clairvoyant” CPK all along, a “correct Marxist-Leninist Party” and a “genuine revolutionary proletarian Party.”³⁸ This claim was consistent with its earlier summary of party history:

The conditions for the formation of the Party in our country were not different in principle from those of the revolutions [that] formed the world’s Marxist-Leninist parties. . . . All followed the same principle of revolution, that is, the people’s revolutionary movement; and the people are the workers (in the industrial countries) or farmers (in the underdeveloped agricultural countries). The formation of the Party was certainly according to Marx and Engels’ ‘Declaration of the Communist Party,’ Lenin’s disciples’ party, the Great October Socialist Revolution, China’s people’s democratic revolution, and revolution throughout the world.³⁹

Pol Pot explained that this forthright Marxist-Leninist party, with its clear-sighted political line, remained in the shadows because bringing it into the open “caused problems for the security of the central leadership. . . . Our enemies were trying to defeat us, using every method at their disposal.” Neither Pol Pot nor any Central Committee figure elaborated on what constituted an “enemy” until 1978, “when all enemies became generically Vietnamese.”⁴⁰ By keeping this classification ambiguous, Pol Pot and the CPK Central Committee could consolidate power further “under the pretext of class struggle” and eliminate opponents of the party line.⁴¹

Angkar’s Warm Embrace: The Protection of Belonging to the Inner Circle

The Central Committee’s identification of “enemies” (outsiders/them) responsible for the CPK’s shortcomings was the next phase of party consolidation. Its instrument to identify and eliminate enemies was its internal security apparatus, *Santibāl* (“Keeper of the Peace”), established in 1971 under Pol Pot loyalists Vorn Vet, Son San, and Kaing Kek Iev (a.k.a. Comrade Duch).⁴² *Santibāl* also operated CPK prison camps in which cadres tortured enemies, and forced them to write life histories and confess to heinous crimes. *Anyone* could feasibly be a traitor to the party and fall under the indiscriminate title of “enemy.” As former Ministry of Foreign Affairs translator, Laurence Picq, recalled:

The scope and number of accusations of plots against *Angkar* was dizzying. The whole family of the accused—brothers, sisters, cousins, nephews, wives, children (even newborns)—were charged with the same crime. . . . All who had approached these traitors, from near or afar, were considered part of the networks organized by the accused. To have been at a meal or a meeting or even to have smiled while shaking hands was proof of complicity. . . . *Angkar* congratulated itself on its understanding, audacity, and will to wipe out all the traitors for the good of the people. This provoked laudatory comments from the combatants: “*Angkar* must truly love the people to turn in cadres it had patiently trained over the years. Long live *Angkar*, which protects us against foreign plots.”⁴³

Cadres participated in political indoctrination to “correct” individualist thought and to weed out enemies “rotting the Party from within.”⁴⁴ CPK authorities also brought intellectuals forward through public displays (“*Angkar* needs you,” one survivor recalls hearing) to confess their “crimes.” Such crimes, party propagandists claimed (falsely), forced the party to return to smaller coopera-

tives, establish regular rest schedules, increase rations, and recall technicians to run the factories in the cities.⁴⁵

The CPK focused its efforts on identifying and eliminating capitalists (businesspersons), intellectuals (foreign or domestically trained), professionals (especially bilingual ones), and remaining Lon Nol soldiers, police, or government employees. In early 1977, for example, the CPK targeted and purged pro-China intellectuals Touch Phoeun (Comrade Phim) and Koy Thuon (Comrade Khuon), both teachers who “continued to exert a strong influence within the Party” to that point.⁴⁶ The party had annihilated any outside threat of intellectual opposition to the CPK, as those few survivors had to hide their knowledge from the *Angkar*’s “many eyes of the pineapple” (*Angkar bhnaek mnās*).⁴⁷ Once former Lon Nol officials and officers were out of the picture by 1976, the CPK leadership focused inward on the elimination of internal enemies. The CPK formalized the change on 30 March 1976, but eliminating internal enemies remained a major problem that impelled Pol Pot to deliver his “Microbes Speech” at a party school in the former French embassy.⁴⁸

Pol Pot’s “Microbes Speech” dehumanized internal enemies as “microbes boring from within” DK to derail the CPK’s path to pure socialism. The “integrity of the organic body of the folk, the collectivity, people, or nation as embodiment of racial-cultural substance,” Robert Jay Lifton notes, impels nationalist leaders’ use of medical terminology to diagnose the harmful elements and restore health to the national body.⁴⁹ CPK propagandists, likewise, used bodily metaphors to encourage cadres to direct their “seething hatred of the enemy” and “burning enthusiasm.” The party fomented peasant resentment of wealthier classes to induce cadres to “want to eat the flesh and sip the blood” of DK’s adversaries.⁵⁰ One slogan claims that anyone who “opposes the Party’s policies and does wrong with his arm, his arm shall be taken,” whereas whoever “does wrong with his leg, his leg shall be taken.”⁵¹ Another calls for cadres to “never allow the worm to gnaw at your bowels,” as if to suggest that the enemy was vermin to be expunged from the national body for it to return to a state of health.

Metaphors soon became action. CPK cadres pushed bodily harm as a symbolically loaded form of punishment in a “spectacle” to enforce discipline.⁵² Public executions and grotesque forms of public execution, which included, in some instances, cadres eating human livers, were part of CPK disciplinary efforts to instill hyper vigilance, hyper productivity, and hyper-subservience among the beleaguered populace.⁵³

Pol Pot also used the “Microbes Speech” to appoint himself as “national doctor” in charge of diagnosing “pathogens” that stalled the CPK revolution.

He claimed that there was a “sickness inside the Party,” that “treacherous elements” and “ugly microbes” are doing “real damage” and “rot us from within.” “Traitorous elements” that the CPK had to arrest included former members of the KPRP and Pracheachon, and from these arrests came “documents,” the Tuol Sleng (S-21) confessions. The party, Pol Pot claimed, had discovered that “treacherous, secret elements [still seem to be] buried inside the Party” and “enemies ha[d] tried to defeat [the CPK] using every possible method.” As he described further:

In 1976 . . . speaking only of internal matters, while we are engaged in a socialist revolution, there is a sickness inside the Party. We cannot locate it precisely. The illness must emerge to be examined. . . . We search for the microbes within the Party without success. They are buried. As our socialist revolution advances, however, seeping more strongly into every corner of the Party, the army and among the people, we can locate the ugly microbes. They will be pushed out by the true nature of the socialist revolution. . . . If we wait any longer, the *microbes* can do real damage. . . . They will rot society, rot the Party, and rot the army. . . . Do not be afraid to lose one or two people of bad background. . . . Driving out the treacherous forces will be a great victory. . . . Everyone must be verified.

The cure, he concluded, was “digging down to unearth the roots”—that is, exposing party members who worked against the party’s political line and program.⁵⁴ Only the Party Center could rectify this problem because its leaders were the lone people in DK who understood the party’s correct political line. The Party Center alone could handle the tasks of defending DK against “internal enemies,” and using the laws of dialectical materialism to “resolve the contradictions in society.”⁵⁵

The final phase of CPK consolidation was its elimination of anyone who disagreed with Pol Pot or his policies. By the “Microbes Speech,” the Central Committee had fallen under Pol Pot’s leadership. Polpotists became the only correct interpreters of the CPK’s “*clean* political line.” A “clean” political consciousness may contain contradictions, but “cleanliness” extended to everyone from the party *outward*. Central Committee members, “high-ranking officials of the Khmer Republic,” and any party member who opposed Pol Pot’s “Draconian policies” thus exhibited unclean thinking and became targets for execution.⁵⁶ Even DK’s chief architects were targets for their lack of “cleanliness.”⁵⁷ Dissenting voices over the CPK’s pursuance of an extreme political line cast these men as outsiders who needed rectification.

Forthright and fiercely loyal to the CPK's bureaucratic Maoism of its earlier movement, Paris Group intellectuals Hou Yuon and Hu Nim were the most famous and highest-ranking members who became targets for execution. Immensely popular politicians in Sihanouk's PSC government in the late 1950s and early 1960s, they had both fled to the *maquis* in 1967. After the 1975 CPK takeover, Yuon and Nim maintained considerable popularity among cadres and occupied major CPK ministerial posts. To delegitimize them was therefore integral to the CPK becoming Pol Pot's regime. Fortuitously for Pol Pot, these Maoist intellectuals with ties to him that dated back to his earlier revolutionary career were also outspoken critics of his policies, and soon met their end for it.

One famous victim of Pol Pot's ire was Hou Yuon, who never shied away from criticizing *Angkar's* implementation of its Maoist vision in the liberated zone cooperatives. In the midst of the war against Lon Nol (1970–1975), he “dare[d] to scold” Pol Pot and accused the Central Committee of appointing him merely as a “puppet minister.”⁵⁸ Yuon's outspokenness rubbed Pol Pot and his fellow leaders the wrong way, and it led to Yuon's 1971 “re-education” at a CPK base on Chinit River (Camp K6). Despite this mea culpa of sorts, Yuon's popularity among peasants earned him clemency and reinstatement in the Central Committee as minister of the interior, communal reform, and cooperatives. He could not contain his criticism for long, though, and this time a mere “re-education” was off the table.

In 1975, Yuon opposed the Central Committee's decision to evacuate nearly four million people from the cities to the countryside.⁵⁹ The reasons for the evacuations varied from leaders' fears that enemy agents hid among the urban populace to designs to transfer the swollen population to the collectives “so that we could feed them, as the collectives had rice fields.”⁶⁰ Regardless of the true motivation behind the evacuations, Yuon opposed the extreme measure because it was in contravention to the CPK commitment to achieving socialism in stages, as Mao originally argued and had to do in China after the disastrous Great Leap. Fellow CPK member Heng Samrin recalled that Yuon “struggled against it. He got up and said that it was not the right situation to evacuate the people from the cities. At that time, Pol Pot accused Hou Yuon of not agreeing to implement the Center's plan.” Now a two-time dissenter of the party's plan and of his contemporary Pol Pot, Yuon was soon to “disappear forever.”⁶¹

Although knowledge of how CPK executioners killed Yuon remains a mystery, accounts by French journalist Jean Lacouture, CPK cadre Ros Kann, and a confidential party report that confirmed that the party had ordered his murder in 1975 or 1976 do exist.⁶² Lacouture recalls that Yuon opposed some of

the Central Committee's suggestions, notably Pol Pot's abolition of Buddhism. He was then "killed by one of his bodyguards" after the seizure of Phnom Penh "as he was departing on a motorcycle from a public meeting where he had criticized the plan to turn pagodas into stables."⁶³ Ros Kann, a CPK cadre from Kampong Cham, noted that Yuon opposed the party's evacuation at a congregation of cadres near the Mekong River at Prek Po. Although Yuon was "applauded by the crowd . . . after leaving this meeting, Hou Yuon was shot dead by a CPK squad, and his body was thrown into the Mekong."⁶⁴ Yet another source claims that Pol Pot and Nuon Chea disapproved of Yuon's position on expanding real cooperatives and for them to be decentralized because they preferred vertical rule from Phnom Penh.⁶⁵ Despite the shroud of mystery around Yuon's fate, his was the first of three high-profile deaths among CPK Central Committee members, and one of the main intellectual architects of DK to die by Pol Pot's order (Hu Nim was another). Yuon's execution signaled the new order in Pol Pot's CPK that anyone who dared to criticize the party's implementation risked arrest, torture, and execution. In this way, the prevailing atmosphere within Pol Pot's CPK was starkly similar to the CCP's after the Great Leap: one in which the supreme leader ruled as an "alcoholic father (drunk with supreme power)."⁶⁶

Traveling Theory in Localized Form: Consolidation in Maoist Kampuchea and China

The process of traveling theory and Leninist response to national dependency that was present in China emerges in localized form in Cambodia in the consolidation phase of its implementation of Maoism. Here, it is worthwhile to review in what ways the Cambodian experience, though different, might speak to or parallel the earlier Chinese model that they were adapting so consciously. In this way, one can identify specific characteristics of the Cambodian experience of adopting a foreign ideology to respond to the effects of imperialism.

Early Maoist China and DK shared similar ideas and methods for identifying and eliminating "enemies." Chinese minister of public safety Luo Ruiqing (1906–1978) referred to hidden and dangerous elements as "counter-revolutionary bacteria . . . dead set to dilate."⁶⁷ Such verbiage recalls the dehumanizing invective that CPK propagandists employed in their campaign to expose enemies. After the CCP's Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries, the party initiated a 1955 campaign to purge the party and government (*sufan*). Once again, this policy of early Maoist China was starkly similar to one in DK, whereby the party purged leaders and cadres whom it deemed as politically suspicious. Importantly, continued purges in China and DK shared

the same rationale that went beyond a normative theory of class struggle. In China, Mao justified purges according to the belief that under socialism, “capitalist roaders” would be engendered within the CCP, which became a famous doctrine of the Maoism of the 1970s. In DK, as detailed above, it was “microbes boring from within.” Thus large-scale political persecution and purges in China and DK, first in society and then in the party, stand out as explicit parallels between the mechanism and pattern of suppression and, ultimately, strong evidence of a Kampucheanization of Maoism.

Another striking resemblance was in rhetoric. Both Mao’s “poisonous weeds” metaphor and Pol Pot’s “Microbes Speech” described enemies as contagions that, if they were to spread, would endanger others, most importantly the party and its quest for socialism. “We are against poisonous weeds of any kind,” Mao urged, “but we must exercise caution in discerning what is really a poisonous weed and what is really a fragrant flower. . . . We must learn to distinguish carefully between fragrant flowers and poisonous weeds . . . with correct methods.”⁶⁸ In virtually the same language, the CPK also cautioned that “when pulling out weeds”—enemies, real and imagined—“remove them roots and all” (*jīk smau trūv jīk deang ræs*).⁶⁹ Nuon Chea once derided suspected counterrevolutionary elements in a speech to CPK cadres, and an issue of *Revolutionary Flag* (*Dan’ Paṭivatt*) declared that internal enemies “tried to make the revolution change its colors.” The hunt to identify and suppress counterrevolutionaries was indeed more far-reaching than merely isolating and killing enemy elements; those “insidious ‘bourgeois’ ideas, preferences, and attitudes,” CPK leaders believed, lay deep within everyone’s minds.⁷⁰

The CPK campaign to eliminate counterrevolutionaries, Pol Pot explained, began with the Party Center as much as with the people. “Each one of us carries deeply-rooted and generations-old vestiges of our old class character,” he propounded, “for the passage to a revolutionary proletarian character remains still quite recent.”⁷¹ Such a mind-set motivated the CPK approach to discerning friend from foe within the party, especially in the case of Hou Yuon. Despite his outspoken nature, Yuon had coexisted with Pol Pot rather peacefully before the takeover, but fell out of the Party Center’s good graces shortly afterward. By 1976–1977, the CPK had turned against diplomats and launched a campaign to purge intellectuals for criticizing excesses and proposing moderate reform (Nim notably suggested the reintroduction of money).⁷² In so doing, the Pol Pot regime combined the CPK goals of mass mobilization and crushing internal enemies. One-time revolutionary comrades became enemies who, though once loyal, were now counterrevolutionaries.

The CPK’s consolidation of power through the implementation of Kampucheanized Maoism concerned its internal consolidation of rule among

Central Committee leadership and of power within the country that it governed. Collective leadership disintegrated into the hands of the party's more extreme personalities, the Pol Pot Group, whereas bureaucratic Maoists Hou Yuon and, later, Hu Nim were purged. Pol Pot semiretired owing to health reasons, crushed his critics, and reoriented party history around his own contributions to make his personal role inseparable from the history of Cambodian Communism.⁷³

Outside the party ranks, cadres expunged DK of intellectuals, professionals, pro-Vietnamese cadres and those with prior links to Vietnam, and ethnic minorities. National revivalism became the cornerstone of this break from the harmonious bureaucratic and faith strands that had made the party "work" during the revolutionary struggle. People who voiced their dissent found themselves at S-21 (Tuol Sleng prison), dead, or both. One scholar suggests that in China, Mao's admission that the CCP needed to kill counterrevolutionaries to "liberate" the people's productive forces served the CPK as a "justification for the massacres of 'class enemies' in 1975."⁷⁴ In such a way, the early PRC and DK years bear a striking resemblance in terms of the types of consolidation that led to mass detainment and executions.

In both cases, earlier violence that was organized and perpetrated by the state set a brutal precedent for later political persecutions and purges. Public, systematic, repeated, and institutionalized mass executions and persecutions were characteristic of both regimes as well. In the case of China, Mao personally masterminded mass executions and set specific quotas for executions, arrests, detainments, and forced labor, which influenced Pol Pot in his quest to eliminate "hidden enemies burrowing from within" (*khmān paṅkap' si ruñ phdae knuñ*). Pol Pot even drew directly from Mao's 1957 speech "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People," in which the Chinese leader identified "eliminating counterrevolutionaries" as "the first type of contradiction" (between the enemy and ourselves).⁷⁵

As Mao did before him during the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries, Pol Pot set an execution-by-quota to eliminate enemies, real and imagined. Pol Pot set a quota for a max total of 140,000 Cambodians ("one-to-two percent" of DK's approximately seven million) in a 1977 speech: "At the heart of the new Kampuchean society there exist irreconcilable and antagonistic life-and-death contradictions [*domṇeās' slāp' ros'*] as enemy agents who belong to various spy networks working for imperialists and international reactionaries and who hide among us to carry out hostile and subversive activities against our revolution." The party did not regard these "treacherous counterrevolutionary elements as part of the people," he elaborated. The only way to handle such contradictions was with appropriate measures: "differen-

tiate, educate, and attract those susceptible elements to correct them and win them over; neutralize those elements that are hesitant and risk undermining the revolution; and, finally, isolate and remove from the state those smallest numbers of elements that persist in engaging in hostile activities against the revolution, nation, and people.”⁷⁶

CPK propagandists produced slogans calling for “brothers who are teachers, students, and intellectuals, go and report to the [Party]” (*pañpaūn ʔael jā sāstrācāry nissit paññavānt, sūmdau pañhāñ mukh camboḥ Angkar*), and for people to “completely get rid of all the castoffs from imperialist, feudal, and reactionary days” (*lap’pampāt’col kaṃael buok cakrabatti sakdiphumi pratikiriya*).⁷⁷ To proceed with a policy of lenience risked undermining the CPK’s vision. After the 17 April 1975 liberation, the CPK moved swiftly to detain tens of thousands of people with bourgeois backgrounds “under informal surveillance in the countryside” or in prison-like “education halls” (*Sālā Ab’raṃ*).⁷⁸

The Chinese and Cambodian Communist Parties’ suppression campaigns also reveal changes in their respective leaders’ thinking. Both began to take criticism personally and responded to opposition with more vitriol than previously. In Mao’s case, his visualization of China as a Communist society run by a munificent party-state had descended into an all-out attack on the national bourgeoisie and critics.⁷⁹ Denigration of the Great Leap’s “single-step socialism” finally shattered the Yan’an roundtable and debonded the political consensus that had held the CCP Party Center together in Yan’an and its first decade as government.

As for the CPK, Pol Pot had been *primus inter pares* for the early years of collective party leadership. His Paris comrades, Hou Yuon and Hu Nim, suggested moderation amid the evacuation of cities and abolition of currency, respectively, which led Pol Pot to have them arrested and killed. Rather than admit mistakes and conduct a self-criticism, the CPK was august and supreme; its political line was correct, with only internal and external agents undermining its brilliant strategies. As CPK slogans indicate: “We, the Communist Party, follow the correct and clear-sighted line” (*yoen jā paks kummuynīst ʔā trīmtruv niñ bhliṣvāñ*) and “The *Angkar*’s [political] line is perfect and just, and remarkably clear-sighted; it represents an extraordinary leap forward” (*Angkar mahā trīmtrūv mahā bhliṣvāñ mahā ascāry*).⁸⁰ Such was especially true for Mao and Pol Pot by the end of their respective economic reconfiguration programs, to which we turn in the next section.

The people of DK toiled in massive, heavily monitored labor camps in the countryside, as the quest for a pure socialism that Mao cautioned Pol Pot and Khieu Samphan against in separate conversations became the myopic focus of Pol Pot’s regime.⁸¹ To achieve it, however, meant that the CPK had to

implement radical industrial development, economic revival, and sociostructural reorganization. Although relocating the people to the countryside and eliminating kinship and traditional relationships initiated the process, DK was in a self-imposed autarkical isolation. The Central Committee thus sought to follow in the footsteps of Stalin and Mao with a Four-Year Plan of its own (“The Party’s Four-Year Plan to Build Socialism in All Fields, 1977–1980”). From 1976 until the CPK’s overthrow in 1979, DK became an isolated gulag in which the party was omnipresent *and* omniscient. The Pol Pot regime’s shortsighted and utterly flawed economic policies ultimately led the body count to skyrocket to new and grotesque heights.

Economic Reconfiguration: “A Great Leap Beyond All Reality”

Our slogan is “Always Constantly Carry Out the Most Powerful Storming Attacks through a Great Leap Forward and Amazing Great Mass Movement.”

—*Revolutionary Flag* (1977)

With the *Angkar*, we shall make a Great Leap Forward, a prodigious Great Leap Forward (*Angkar mahā loṭphloh mahā ascāry*)

—CPK slogan

This section shifts to the economic reconfiguration phase of the CPK’s implementation of Maoism, specifically, the Super Great Leap Forward and the ramifications of its failure. CPK Central Committee leaders convened at a three-day meeting in late August 1976 to codify the Four Year Plan in a secret, unpublished Central Committee document as the answer to Cambodia’s lingering underdevelopment crises. The focus here is on the first two parts of this document, which outline CPK plans for agriculture and industry, building socialism in its industrial sector, and developing a revolutionary culture and education. The section also tracks the transformation of the CPK’s Maoism during the Super Great Leap into Polpotism.⁸² The Pol Pot Group’s faith Maoism centered on Pol Pot, whose preoccupation with “Original Culture” (Khmer cultural purity) and distrust of Vietnamese underpinned the ethno-chauvinist dimension of Polpotism. The Pol Pot regime proceeded to blame, denigrate, and dehumanize Vietnamese, Cham Muslims, ethnic Chinese, and “Khmer Bodies with Vietnamese minds” (*khluon Khmer khuor kpal Yuon*) for the Super Great Leap’s shortcomings.

Scholarly assessments of the Super Great Leap tend to cluster around four lines of interpretation. One describes it as “the most rapid and comprehensive collectivization ever witnessed” because the CPK annihilated the extant social structure and “created *ex nihilo* a ‘socialist’ infrastructure.”⁸³ Proponents of a second line argue that Pol Pot was faithful to the Chinese Great Leap Forward “beyond all hope and reason.” Cambodia’s “puritanical cultural policies,” they hold, filtered through “policies of the Chinese Cultural Revolution,” themselves inspired by similar movements in the Soviet Union.⁸⁴ A third line identifies “fierce nationalist pride” as what incited CPK leaders to upstage China, the Soviet Union, North Korea, and Vietnam in “leaping abruptly into absolute Communism.”⁸⁵ The fourth line claims that it is “patently obvious” that Mao’s economic reconfiguration did not reach the same level of extremes as in DK because Mao neither evacuated all Chinese cities nor “elevate[d] bloodshed to a national ritual.”⁸⁶

This section posits a fifth: in style, the Super Great Leap was the CPK’s totalitarian effort to situate its revolution as the purest in world history and one that leaped successfully into Communism without preliminary stages. As the “Four Year Plan” outlines: “Our revolutionary movement is a new experience, and an important one in the whole world, because we do not perform like others. We leap from a people’s democratic revolution to a socialist revolution, and quickly build socialism. We do not need a long period of time for the transformation. Ours is a new experience, and people are observing it. We don’t follow any book. We act according to the actual situation in our country.”⁸⁷ Moreover, former CPK Eastern Zone secretary, Chea Sim, recalled that his superior, Nuon Chea, described socialist construction in DK as containing “two parts, agriculture and industry. . . . [The former] would be modernized in ten to fifteen years by scientific methods, by preparing irrigation dams and canals all over the country. . . . [The latter] would be modernized in a similar period.”⁸⁸ However, in substance, the Super Great Leap was anything but Sim’s description.

The Super Great Leap was an abject disaster, in part, because of the CPK’s complete decoupling of faith Maoism from the Maoism that had characterized the collective leadership and Communist movement. Now, the CPK attempted to implement ideology without regard for concrete conditions. Party leaders blamed failures on “enemies” and “agents” when, in reality, it was a consequence of the attempt to implement a fundamentally flawed ideological vision divorced from reality.⁸⁹ Industry thus did not grow, agricultural production and year-round rice cultivation became the sole driving thrusts, and countless thousands died with the Leap’s abysmal failure.⁹⁰

Despite the failure of the Chinese Great Leap Forward, the CPK's Super Great Leap nevertheless emulated the disastrous aim of its predecessor to triple national agricultural production within a year through industrial and agricultural collectivization and high production quotas. CPK planners sought to expand on the party cooperatives that were in place before the 17 April seizure of state power and drew heavily from the foundational national texts of DK that CPK ideological architects Hou Yuon and Hu Nim wrote as students. Yuon's mentee, and one of Pol Pot's trusted lieutenants, Khieu Samphan, recalled the following:

The revolutionary orthodoxy, as it was such in the years of my studies in Paris, distinguished several levels of cooperatives. For those cooperatives of a "higher level," the harvest was not destined or intended to be shared, but instead stored in common warehouses while daily life in collectives entailed that each member received the same diet and food rations. In light of the failure of Soviet state farms (*sovkhozes*), I thought to myself that such organizations could not work in Cambodia, and if Khmer Rouge leaders sought to establish "higher level" cooperatives, it had to be only for the purpose of experimentation. To encourage farmers to accept handing over the entire product of their labor to the "co-operative," a lengthy explanation of patient work was well needed. Yet should we give them concrete proof that this mode of production improved their living conditions significantly?⁹¹

Major obstacles included restructuring CPK-run cooperatives and expanding on them at a national level. China presented an alternative to the failed Soviet template, and the "Little Leap" received praise from Hu Nim. But merely mimicking China's successes was not on the table for the Pol Pot-led CPK. Strategists aimed instead to *surpass* Mao's Great Leap by pursuing the very "crash agriculturalization" and "crash collectivization" that Mao abandoned after the Great Leap.⁹² The CPK also closed national markets, and had previously abolished currency, collectivized fields, and encouraged a highly supervised and rigorously disciplined way of life.⁹³

Absent currency, salary and rank, or private property ownership, DK society was to be fueled by building socialism in agriculture. The first part of the "Four Year Plan" document outlines as much in its identification of problems that stood in the way of achieving the CPK's two main objectives of raising the people's standard of living and increasing capital from agriculture. To accomplish the first objective, DK had to maximize rice production in rice-growing areas. To achieve the second, it had to govern rations and solve the "water problem" to "gain mastery over water" (to meet the quota of three

tons per hectare per annum). A third, interrelated objective was that the party must develop energy, chemicals, industrial crops, and tools.⁹⁴ Nationwide initiatives to maximize rice production (“If we have rice, we can have it all”) became the program’s foundation.⁹⁵ As an issue of *Revolutionary Flag*, the official organ of the CPK Central Committee, explained:

Our experience has been that some places are constantly on the attack and that the people are therefore without worry and constantly have healthy, beaming faces. Some places, however, are not constantly on the attack but are only on the attack two or three months a year. They wait for the season to arrive. If we are constantly on small-scale attack we will constantly have something to put in our pots and be able to maintain our produce in granaries. . . . In the northwest, we must constantly attack . . . 100–200 hectares here and there. If we attack Pursat in this manner, 3000 hectares presents no difficulties. It is the same with the Stung Chinit [in Kampong Thom province]: we must start attacking it now, attacking after the harvest, without waiting for early next year. This would be a big waste of water, because it would both disappear into the ground and run-off.⁹⁶

Intensified mass cultivation was a lofty ambition; Cambodian soil was poor and traditional growing seasons were short. Amid rice, water, and food shortages, the Super Great Leap continued. Party propagandists encouraged malnourished and overworked Cambodians to “be determined always to carry out work very rapidly and by leaps and bounds” (pdejñā trūv tae prakān’khjāp’ jānicc nūv kāñhā tã mahā lotphloh mahā ascār). Other slogans impelled workers to ignore their suffering altogether: “In spite of exhaustion, you must always move forward!” (dohjāsas’ kamlān yāññā kãtoy truvtae dau mukh jeanicc!) and “On the work site until death!” (slāp’ nau loe kārthān!).⁹⁷ Peace and quiet in DK was tantamount to surrender, whereas working and toiling all day and night signaled to the Pol Pot regime that all was good.

News of widespread starvation and death did not disturb the Pol Pot regime. As the leader himself claimed over Radio Phnom Penh, Cambodians were “happy” living in DK society “under the most correct, most clear-sighted leadership of our revolutionary organization because they are building the country with their own hands, having eliminated slavery, and working as the masters of the water, land, country, and revolution.”⁹⁸ Happiness for the CPK Party Center apparently entailed that men and women could not return to their homes, people had to subsist on meager rations while party leaders ate to their hearts’ content, and that all marriages were CPK officiated. An issue of *Revolutionary Flag* noted that were the party to permit the people to “go back

to eating at home . . . then we are on our way to privatism” and, thus, compromising the collective socialist system.⁹⁹

The second part of the document, “Socialism in the Industrial Sector,” entailed operating light and heavy industry to avoid foreign dependency.¹⁰⁰ The CPK held that China, North Korea, and the USSR had failed because their leaders had placed primacy on heavy industry. DK, by contrast, must rely on its own line in accordance with the Cambodian situation. “We rely on the powerful revolutionary spirit, experience, and creative ingenuity of our people,” Pol Pot declared in a 1977 speech. “We take agriculture as the basic factor and use the fruits of agriculture to build industry to rapidly transform Kampuchea from a backward agricultural state into a modernized one . . . by standing firmly on the principles of independence, initiative, and self-reliance,” he stated further.¹⁰¹

Although Mao had taken agriculture as the basis after the Great Leap Forward, the CPK made agricultural production the sole pillar of its Super Great Leap, “first for light industry and second for heavy industry.” Unwilling to revise its strategy to fit concrete realities, the “Four Year Plan” declared that “we only have to earn capital from agriculture.” Of course, this was the case because there was insufficient capital due to the CPK’s abolition of money and markets and DK’s autarkic isolation.¹⁰² If the cities were “always waiting around for support from the countryside,” an issue of *Revolutionary Flag* elaborates, that would “be a very heavy burden.”¹⁰³ There were factories under CPK supervision, but the party either co-opted or repurposed them for the production of soap and other goods.

Evidently, this did not represent building up DK’s industry and creating the urban proletariat that CPK propagandists argued was a prerequisite for industrialization.¹⁰⁴ The “Four Year Plan” document acknowledges DK’s deficiency in this area: “Compared to other countries, in industrial terms, we are extremely weak.”¹⁰⁵ Cambodians had to earn capital from agriculture exclusively, and thus, DK’s beleaguered populace slaved for sixteen hours a day under tight supervision and with barely anything to eat; thousands perished from malnourishment, disease, and extrajudicial killings by cadre supervisors. The Super Great Leap overseers’ uncompromising emphases on total self-reliance and rapidity, and unwillingness to revise their strategy to suit existing conditions, contributed to the program’s spectacular failure.¹⁰⁶ By setting reasonable production quotas, reducing punishments for lower producers, and approaching its program with less rigidity, the Super Great Leap may have been less of a disaster. To date, however, there exists no evidence that the CPK Central Committee entertained a gradualist approach.¹⁰⁷

Instead, the CPK plan was characterized by autarky for which the Paris Group, most of all Yuon’s disciple, Khieu Samphan, had advocated and which was present in the Chinese Great Leap.¹⁰⁸ Pol Pot and his loyalists pushed autarky, mass collectivization, and state-directed modernizing initiatives to “leap from a people’s democratic revolution into socialism.” Samphan even boasted that DK “will be the first nation to create a completely Communist society without wasting time on intermediate steps.”¹⁰⁹ As the “Four Year Plan” claimed:

[Our] situation is completely different from other countries. . . . When China was liberated in 1949, the Chinese prepared to end the people’s democratic revolution before they prepared to carry out the reforms leading to socialism. A long period of time was required. In 1955 they started people’s communes. Take the example of Korea, liberated in 1945. Not until 1958 did they establish cooperatives throughout the country; at that time, cooperatives consisted of between twenty and thirty families. After liberation, it took them a long time to reach socialism. They did not carry out a genuine socialist revolution until 1958. They needed fourteen years to make the transition. North Vietnam did the same. Now a similar situation applies in South Vietnam. They need a longer period of time to make the transition.¹¹⁰

The CPK’s evacuation of people and abolition of currency and markets were what Pol Pot viewed as the determining factors in achieving pure socialism. “Our socialism is characterized by its speed,” he urged. “In terms of method we are extremely fast.”¹¹¹ As an anonymous CPK official reflected, the Vietnamese revolutionary method was “very slow,” and “it took a long time to sort out the good from the counter-revolutionaries. Khmer methods do not require large personnel. . . . [We] have adopted the method which consists in overturning the basket with all the fruit inside. . . . The Vietnamese did not tip over the basket, they picked out the rotten fruit. This is the Great Leap Forward of the Khmer revolution.”¹¹² DK was thus “already a socialist society” in the countryside and cities, where all goals were, and had always been, collective.¹¹³

The CPK leadership also held firmly in its conviction that the Super Great Leap did not need to pass through stages, and only needed to reach production quotas at breakneck speed while simultaneously outing counterrevolutionary agents hiding among the people. The CPK’s reason for its totalistic approach to economic reconfiguration was its leadership’s view that other attempts of sweeping industrialization had failed to eliminate vestiges of capitalism. Previous efforts, by Mao or other Communist leaders, had not gone

far enough. This position recalls the CCP's critique of the Soviets and their effort to "cut off capitalist tails" (*ge zibenzhu yi weiba*) during the Great Leap:

The people customarily eat whatever they like to eat, so long as they have the money. In the socialist part of the world at present the problem has been posed that too strong an emphasis on collectivization leads to a disappearance of the individual or family nourishment. That's why they allow some privateness and still use money. As we see, this path doesn't completely repress capitalists. They already have socialism as the base, but they haven't gotten clear from the capitalist framework; China and Korea are examples. . . . Within this group the capitalist and private sectors are in the process of daily strengthening and expanding their base in every aspect.¹¹⁴

The problem, however, was that the CPK was unable, or unwilling, to address the major contradiction between its revolution's "genuine socialist" and "uniquely Cambodian" orientations. DK documents indicate that leaders did not devote significant time to resolving the contradiction between the CPK's socialist-universalist and national-revivalist orientations.¹¹⁵

Pol Pot proclaimed that as a "pure," unprecedented socialist movement with total collectivization, this course was "a precious model for the world's people, the world's revolutionary movement, and the international Communist movement."¹¹⁶ Yet simultaneously, only Khmers could achieve the Leap's lofty development goals in line with the CPK's commitment to self-reliance and "independence-mastery" (*aekarājy mcās'kār*). CPK designs were undoubtedly outside the realms of possibility without a catastrophic toll on the laboring populace, and production quota falsification was common. Thus emerged a similar "tournament system" that had characterized Mao's Great Leap. The CPK even awarded the "Honorary Red Flag" (*Dañ'kraham kittiyas*) to those very few exemplary districts that supposedly exceeded quotas and to put those that did not on notice.¹¹⁷ The Central Committee stressed, amid widespread starvation and endemic disease, that the revolution's present situation "is excellent in all fields."¹¹⁸

As in China, where the Great Leap Forward's disastrous outcomes initiated the rise of faith Maoism, the Super Great Leap's catastrophic shortcomings intensified the party's shift toward Polpotism. This faith Maoism of a CPK type cycled back to the individual leader. It also distinguished itself from faith Maoism in its stress of national characteristics as determining factors and the otherness of outsiders, whether counterrevolutionaries or ethnic minorities, as reasons for delays in socialist construction. Duch described the party's thought not as Maoist, but as Polpotist for these very reasons. He stated such because under Pol Pot's leadership, the party's ideology centered on him. Polpotism,

he continues, broke from Marxism-Leninism’s emphasis on proletarian leadership in practice and reinterpreted the Maoist class analyses of Hou Yuon and Hu Nim into recognizing only workers and peasants.¹¹⁹ Pol Pot was the career revolutionary who had abandoned his studies in Paris to join the clandestine movement, and who had crushed the intellectual criticism of Yuon and Nim in consolidating his leadership. Only one Paris Group member, Khieu Samphan, survived such purges, and only by dint of his blind obedience to Pol Pot.¹²⁰

As for the role of national characteristics in Polpotism, Pol Pot urged Cambodians to rely on antiquated methods of irrigation digging and rice cultivation as part of an effort to rely only on their own forces. The necessary capital to create such an expansion was inconsequential; “our natural characteristics,” a CPK document urged, “have given us great advantages compared [with] China.”¹²¹ Cambodian *natural characteristics* were therefore the real motive forces that propelled the Super Great Leap.

Pol Pot’s emphasis on natural characteristics—although exhibiting his racial-historical fixation—bears a striking resemblance to Mao’s perspective on social formation and the “causal primacy of the productive forces within it.”¹²² Pol Pot emphasized that natural characteristics empowered his people with unlimited capabilities. A CPK slogan broadcast over Radio Phnom Penh epitomized this sense of achievement and boundless potential: “During more than 2000 years, our people have lived in complete destitution and the deepest despair. . . . If our people could build Angkor Wat, they are capable of doing anything.”¹²³ For Pol Pot, natural characteristics constituted elements that owed in part to his French education, which had impressed upon him these themes in relation to the French Revolution: cultural purity, superiority, and accomplishment. The purity element no doubt traces its origins to Pol Pot’s former mentor Keng Vannsak’s dissertation, in which its author regards Buddhism and Hinduism as pathogens that infected Khmer cultural purity.¹²⁴ Those unwelcome “agents,” importantly, lacked these natural characteristics, and the CPK search for so-called counterrevolutionaries only intensified with the dissolution of collective leadership and the rise of Pol Pot.

By the end of 1976, the Super Great Leap’s economic failures had given rise to dissenters to the Pol Pot leadership, with “(real and imagined) plots and coups” inspiring much of Pol Pot’s paranoia. As Picq recalls, “The scope and number of plots against Angkar was dizzying. The whole family of the accused—brothers, sisters, cousins, nephews, wives, children (even newborns)—were charged with the same crime.”¹²⁵ The CPK Central Committee targeted class enemies first, and like Mao, it was ruthless in repressing intellectuals who criticized the Super Great Leap. The party leadership was adamant that internal agents remained an omnipresent threat to its regime: “To achieve the

construction of socialism progressively . . . we must take care to carefully screen internal agents . . . in the Party, in the armed forces, in the various organizations and ministries in the government, and among the masses of the people . . . Nuon Chea said. . . . The line of carefully screening internal agents [will] improve and purify . . . to implement the line of building socialism that it advances to modernization by new scientific technology.”¹²⁶ Thus while the CPK leadership confronted drastic production shortages of its collectivization program, it blamed others instead of its own mismanagement.

In the minds of the CPK leadership, the Vietnamese were the eternal enemy whom Pol Pot had set his sights on eradicating wholly for their supposed role in sabotaging party programs.¹²⁷ The anti-Vietnamese character of Polpotism is the most pronounced feature of his faith Maoism and speaks to the CPK’s turn toward national revival in a Polpotist mold. Many Cambodians had felt “a national inferiority complex which took refuge in dreams of ancient grandeur” (the “temple complex”).¹²⁸ Nowhere was this more evident than in Pol Pot’s memory. Throughout his recollections of experiences as a student under the French, then under the Vietnamese as a revolutionary, Vietnamese had always relegated him to the periphery of larger designs. In Paris, Keng Vannsak influenced Pol Pot to the extent that he took it upon himself to publish under the pseudonym “Original Khmer,” in homage to Vannsak’s dissertation on “Original Culture.”¹²⁹

Alongside Pol Pot’s negative impression of Vietnamese Communists, who dismissed his Cambodia program as unsophisticated, he developed a hatred of the Vietnamese that extended to all of Cambodia’s ethnic minorities. Rather than “embedded enemy boring holes from within the ranks of the revolution,” the CPK leadership held that these visible enemies posed as impediments to socialist development and, thus, had to be removed by the party to realize the CPK vision of socialist utopia.¹³⁰ The party targeted ethnic Chinese for ties to cities and the entrepreneur class, forced Chams to eat pork on pain of death, and forbade Cham women from wearing their hair long.¹³¹ But undoubtedly, CPK rhetoric was most vitriolic toward the Vietnamese. Pol Pot accused the Vietnamese, in particular, of infiltrating DK and causing the Super Great Leap’s famine: “To say millions died is too much. . . . Vietnamese agents were there. There was rice, but they didn’t give rice to the population. . . . My conscience is clear.”¹³² In Pol Pot’s mind, Khmers were “pure” and “full of goodwill,” whereas the Vietnamese, whom he called “Yuon,” were evil and “perfidious.”¹³³

Despite previous cooperation with Vietnamese Communists, the former “brothers in arms” were now the CPK leadership’s scapegoat. *Yuon*, a name “given by Kampuchea’s people to the Vietnamese since the epoch of Angkor,” now meant the “life and death foes” of the Cambodian revolution.¹³⁴ Clashes

between the CPK military and those of neighboring Vietnam and Thailand had begun in 1975 as DK forces invaded Phu Quoc, a Vietnamese island that is closer to Cambodia than it is to Vietnam, on 1 May. Though a period of peace began the following year, tensions rose once again as the party came under Pol Pot's unquestioned leadership in 1976. After several attempts to display a willingness to work together, notably with the establishment of the Phnom Penh–Ho Chi Minh City air link, the CPK leadership had a falling out with Vietnamese leaders Pham Van Dong and Le Duan. Both were wary of Pol Pot's ties to Maoist China, as Pol Pot visited China on official state visits between 1975 and 1978, and DK received Chinese technical experts and aid.¹³⁵ The Vietnamese leaders regarded his leadership group as “bad people” who threatened the Moscow-aligned Vietnamese Communists' genuine Marxist-Leninist movement.¹³⁶ By the time that the CPK announced itself to the world in 1977 with Pol Pot as its leader, the Central Committee's seething hatred of the “running dog” Vietnamese had become a defining feature of Polpotism.¹³⁷ A Phnom Penh home service broadcast even called for a full-scale attack to defeat all fifty million Vietnamese in 1978.¹³⁸

Unlike Mao, who was a committed historical materialist whose writings and speeches never targeted ethnic minorities, CPK propagandists, and especially Pol Pot, rewrote history to demonize the Vietnamese.¹³⁹ One document, the *Black Paper* (*Livre Noir*), decried past Vietnamese rulers for the “sordid use of girls” to trick Khmers into trusting them. The Vietnamese “have often resorted to these sordid methods consisting of selling their girls to achieve their annexationist ambitions . . . and today do not hesitate to carry out the same repugnant methods,” the *Black Paper* alleged.¹⁴⁰ Historical revisions included portraying past Khmer rulers as historic victims of Vietnamese perfidy and holding Vietnamese in the present responsible for the brutal conditions under which Khmer laborers worked when constructing the Vinh Te Canal in early nineteenth-century Nguyen dynasty Vietnam. As for a supposed Vietnamese cruel nature, the *Black Paper* claimed that the Vietnamese had an inherent “evil nature,” a negative attitude toward Cambodians, and an overarching “desire to destroy Cambodia and its people.”¹⁴¹

Only about forty thousand Vietnamese remained in DK, yet the Pol Pot regime placed the blame for its own mismanagement squarely on this historical “enemy” of the Cambodian people.¹⁴² Pol Pot feared that the Vietnamese had designs on incorporating Cambodia into an “Indochina Federation” in which Hanoi dictated all affairs. *Revolutionary Flag* captures Pol Pot's fears clearly:

All of this expansion and development with respect to organizing has been performed on the basis of a maximum spirit of independence/

master/self-support . . . in the great mass movement to attack and smash the aggressive, expansionist, territory-swallowing, genocidal Yuon enemy and in the great mass movement to *sweep cleanly away* the concealed enemies boring from within who are CIA agents, *Yuon running dog agents* and KGB agents, cooperatives throughout the country have played an important leading role in carrying out activities fulfilling their missions, bringing about a strategic victory for the nation, the people, the Party and the revolution.¹⁴³

Party propagandists also characterized Vietnamese as “territory-swallowing Yuon and the running dogs” who must be vanquished “throughout the whole Party, throughout the whole army and throughout the people.”¹⁴⁴ The last part (throughout the people) is noteworthy because of the party’s continued use of body metaphors from the “Microbes Speech.” Revolutionary “cleanliness,” ultimately, became the rule of the day, and all outsiders had to be “clean” or “cleaned out.”

Although CPK aims for the Super Great Leap Forward were similar to the CCP’s expected outcomes for its version of transforming an underdeveloped country into an industrialized one, the Pol Pot regime drew on only the most radical extremes and ignored several realities on the ground. The CPK leadership’s vision of a “self-sufficient state free of foreign intervention” and “eras[ing] any barriers to the revolution” isolated the country and prevented it from achieving lofty industrialization goals.¹⁴⁵ Leaders also stressed the party’s original character as the cause for its leap to pure socialism, and eventually abandoned industrialization for year-round agricultural development.¹⁴⁶ The Party Center seemingly did not know, or purposefully ignored, that Cambodian soil was among the poorest in Asia and that DK lacked mineral and industrial wealth. This meant that although development was not impossible for DK, it was not feasible on the time scale envisioned by the CPK.¹⁴⁷ Nevertheless, CPK leaders were certain that the party could modernize the country through aggressive rice cultivation, and solving the “water problem” by building a network of dikes, canals, reservoirs, and irrigation pumps without modern tools.¹⁴⁸

In areas where the Chinese Great Leap had failed—rich peasant and party intellectual resistance and directing rural development from cities—the Super Great Leap sought to outdo. For, as one secret CPK document proclaimed, “we have a different character from them. If we examine our collective character, in terms of a socialist system, we are four to ten years ahead of them. We have new relations of production; nothing is confused, as it is with them.”¹⁴⁹ But it was clear to Pol Pot in 1977 that his party’s errors in calculation had resulted in innumerable casualties. The rice yield was particularly low, the Super Great

Leap was anything but super or great, and the total casualties caused by starvation, overwork, and disease numbered in the hundreds of thousands.

Pol Pot was unwilling to admit this failure. Instead, he blamed failings on class enemies and “Vietnamese provocateurs.” Their counterrevolutionary “character” made them enemies of the DK state, and thus they had to be eliminated. “Character” marked a major trend in the party’s Maoism, as those outsiders who did not possess this feature became the scapegoats for the Super Great Leap’s plenitude of failures.¹⁵⁰

Others were to blame for the emergence of negatives tendencies, with the glorious paterfamilias, Pol Pot, emerging as the standard bearer of personal achievement and exemplary practice. Pol Pot’s vision for the social transformation of his people led to some significant departures from Maoism in the further Kampucheanization of faith Maoism into Polpotism. Some of these departures included his view that DK consisted solely of workers and peasants and that monks, religion, elites, and anyone with ties to monarchy had to be eliminated instead of “saving the patient.” Pol Pot also took a particularly vitriolic stance toward DK’s neighbor and former ally, the Vietnamese. But merely targeting the Vietnamese in DK was not enough. As the massive failures of the Super Great Leap mounted, Vietnamese became prime targets for the realization of Pol Pot’s skewed vision for greater DK, the reclamation of “lost” Khmer lands in South Vietnam.¹⁵¹ This racialized hatred extended to DK’s own populace, as workers who did not produce satisfactorily or who had conflicted with their cadre overseers became “Khmer bodies with Vietnamese minds.” The result was a CPK program that was hell-bent on the complete erasure of Khmer society as it existed before 1975. Buddhist monks, non-Khmers, and anyone with prerevolutionary thought and tendencies were all targets for elimination.

Great Leaps beyond All Reality: China and Kampuchea

There were remarkable parallels between the CPK’s process, if not in the context and results, and earlier models of Mao’s, of which Pol Pot and his Paris colleagues were aware (even with the Chinese version’s tragic human cost and shortcomings). Despite one scholar’s claim that the CPK slogan of a “Super Great Leap Forward” was an “exaggerated imitation” of Mao’s program that reflected the party’s “perceived need to demonstrate Kampuchean superiority over Vietnam in socialist construction,” the CPK leadership actually regarded itself as without equal *in history*.¹⁵² Its Great Leap was a more ignominious, abject disaster that ignored development and fixated on purging “enemies.” Under the CPK’s twin campaign of “building” DK by harnessing its economy and

“defending” it through the suppression of state enemies, the party promised its beleaguered masses that “we shall make a prodigious Great Leap forward” (*Angkar mahā lotphloh mahā ascāry*).¹⁵³

However, the program ignored industrial development and focused entirely on agriculture. As it failed to deliver on its architects’ grandiose promises, CPK propagandists and Pol Pot himself accused the same, and new, enemies of sabotaging the party’s clear-sighted program. Good results for the Super Great Leap were then linked directly to targeting, identifying, and killing enemies, as Pol Pot outlined in a 1976 Party Center document: “Enemies attack and torment us. From the east and from the west, they persist in pounding us and worrying us. If we are slow and weak, they will mistreat us.”¹⁵⁴ Amid the Chinese Great Leap’s failure, the CPK leadership held firm to its convictions that the party’s version would succeed. Leaders also held that the CCP’s failed experiment of economic reconfiguration was because they had not been radical enough. The high watermark for the CPK was now to surpass the great Khmer Empire. As one slogan demanded, “Through rapid development, our country must surpass the Angkor period” (*kāsān jāti aoypān jōen lōen loes samāy Angkor*).¹⁵⁵

The CPK’s failed economic development policies led Pol Pot and his loyalists to turn on each other and single out critics. In China, the contentious aftermath of the Great Leap “set the stage for the final split of the Yan’an leadership, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution,” a major reference point for Pol Pot in style and substance.¹⁵⁶ Onetime colleagues from Pol Pot’s student and guerrilla years were now “enemies” who had to confess their counterrevolutionary crimes. Former comrades, including DK’s intellectual thrust, thus constituted the very scapegoats that the CPK required to deflect attention away from grandiose failures and to explain the Super Great Leap’s disastrous shortcomings. In both China and DK, the post-Leap eras signaled that now, only revolutionary fervor, bellicose speeches, grandiose promises of utopian glory, and limitless potential for revolutionary futures were acceptable.

Social Transformation: “Year Zero”

This section paints a fuller picture of the CPK’s implementation of its radical vision in the social transformation (revolutionary perpetuation) phase of the expanded traveling theory model. The CPK sought to restructure all of society according to its own greater design for achieving pure socialism. The final section of the “Four Year Plan” document, entitled “The Fields of Revolutionary Culture, Literature, and Art of the Worker-Peasant Class in Accord-

dance with the Party’s Proletarian Standpoint,” highlights three dimensions of this social transformation (Year Zero): (1) the widespread reeducation of new people (urbanites) in the ways of old/base people to eliminate individualist tendencies, (2) the total erasure of Cambodia’s cultural institutions to create a void that the party could occupy, and (3) the elimination of party theorists who questioned Pol Pot’s leadership in SEM-style intraparty rectification. The goal of this section is to capture the CPK’s designs for a revolutionary “new” culture to replace the “olds,” which the CPK viewed as a hindrance to revolutionary progress, and to track the party’s ongoing shift toward Polpotism.

Year Zero, a nickname for the CPK’s social transformation, borrowed its namesake from the French Revolution (an early influence on the CPK intellectual thrust). The CPK aimed to “abolish, uproot, and disperse the cultural, literary, and artistic remnants of the imperialists, colonialists, and all of the other oppressor classes,” as virtually *all* prerevolutionary institutions were targets for erasure.¹⁵⁷ To “overturn the basket of society,” the CPK chose “only the fruit that suited them perfectly.”¹⁵⁸ This entailed leaving out “rotten fruits” such as authority figures, cultural symbols, new people whom the party deemed unfit for reform, and others (notably the Vietnamese). To the party, they were all “no profit and no loss” (*nul profit, nulle perte*).¹⁵⁹

After the CPK’s forced evacuation of the cities, it confronted the problem of identifying and eliminating potential “enemies” hidden from view. Although important to the evacuation’s greater design, transforming Cambodian society in accordance with the party’s Polpotist vision was the most powerful motivator for relocating the entire populace to the countryside. The CPK’s ideology was significantly “less appealing to most wealthy, educated urbanites,” whom the party labeled uniformly as “oppressors.” Urbanites’ comparatively comfortable living and disregard for peasants made their compassion for rural suffering nonexistent in CPK leaders’ views.¹⁶⁰ But by the 1975 takeover, most of the cities had swollen with peoples rich and poor, urban and rural, who fled areas of conflict for safety. The major question for the CPK was what to do with the “new people.” Were they worthy of Mao-era “save the patient” style rehabilitation? Or, to borrow from the party parlance, were they “unclean” in thinking and action? Like the sent-down corrupt rural cadres and the CCP members who worked alongside peasants and were reformed through labor during the SEM, new people were to work, learn, and live as peasants in DK.

Initially, the CPK preferred, at least rhetorically, reforming new people through labor: to be “comrade ox” and think only of labor and following party instructions. This approach followed in the footsteps of the Stakhanovite movement in the Soviet Union and the model worker (*laodong mofan, laomo*) of

Maoist China.¹⁶¹ The Stakhanovite movement, so named in 1935 to iconize Aleksei Grigorievich Stakhanov for generating fourteen times his mandated coal production quota, was spurred by Soviet workers who sought to uphold the worker-hero spirit of the movement's namesake during the Second Five-Year Plan (1933–1937).¹⁶²

Likewise, model workers in Maoist China embodied the CCP's ideal laborer and upstanding socialist citizen. Many factory workers and rural laborers who gained recognition as model workers earned unthinkable opportunities for upward social mobility. For example, in 1959 a young fitter named Ni Zhifu, who worked in a Beijing machinery factory and whom CCP media lauded as "diligent in thinking, courageous in exploration," invented a three-point, seven-blade edge drill (the "Ni Zhifu drill"). His inventive spirit and "full mobilization of the enthusiasm of cadres, employees, and engineering and technical personnel to promote technological innovation" led to his meteoric rise to "model worker," then leadership positions in municipal governments and membership in the CCP Politburo.¹⁶³

The CPK also sought to lionize those whom the party leadership deemed deserving of the "Honorary Red Flag" for their unquestionable obedience and high production. The difference, however, was that awardees were districts rather than individuals, in keeping with the prevailing anti-individualism that reigned supreme at the time. CPK propagandists had declared individualism a disease while stressing the collective above all else.¹⁶⁴

The party railed against those among its ranks who suffered from the "chronic diseases of Khmer bureaucrats," notably "officiousness, authoritarianism, and affecting the lifestyle different from that of the peasant."¹⁶⁵ Former CPK cadre Ith Sarin recalled that this widespread attack extended to all party levels regardless of rank and was often at the crux of self-criticism sessions: "All personnel of the '*Angkar*,' including military and ordinary peasants, engage in weekly criticism and self-criticism sessions aimed to root out 'individualistic, personal' character traits." Cadres also completed mandatory manual work "such as chopping firewood and helping out during the agricultural cycle, all the while carefully watching each other for non-revolutionary behavior in eating, drinking, talking, and late rising, etc." This combination of "criticism/self-criticism for all and manual activities for the cadre," he continues, "aims to build proper socialists and prepares the cadre to endure future hardships. . . . Cadre-building concentrated on forcing '*Angkar*' officials to 'study from the people to become like the people.'"¹⁶⁶

The model of behavior and action that CPK leaders admired, though neither Pol Pot nor his loyalists ever experienced it, was the ways of the *old people*:

rural workers who had lived in CPK liberated zones during the movement. *Old people* were Cambodia's poorest strata and were those who had lived in CPK liberated zones during the Communist movement. *Old people* were also the primary target audience for many of the party's promises for social change and national redemption. But as the CPK Party Center grew suspicious of internal "enemies," *new people* became expendable and suffered mightily throughout the DK era. *New people* often received considerably less food and cadres were more willing to execute them for misdoings. CPK cadres often reminded them that the old society that afforded them a carefree life was long gone. This was DK, and no longer would consumerism, rugged individualism, and usury go unchecked.¹⁶⁷

In the CPK's self-aggrandizement as "an almost divine, 'clear-sighted,' 'enlightened' entity," Alex Hinton notes, it "revamp[ed] Communist ideology in terms of local idioms. Like the Buddha, *Angkar* was an enlightened and all-knowing center from which power radiated. Like the Bayon [twelfth-century state temple of Khmer ruler Jayavarman VII] *Angkar* was an *axis mundi* that encompassed all the lands, seeing everything with its many eyes. Like Jayavarman VII, *Angkar* was a dominant ruler whose power flowed outward, providing comforting shade to the masses it controlled."¹⁶⁸ To transform all new people into "comrade ox," the CPK enforced a rigorous disciplinary regimen that blended long and hard workdays with total supervision.

Discipline is "a modality for its exercise," Michel Foucault notes, one that comprises a "whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of applications." An "exercise of discipline," he elaborates, "presupposes a mechanism that coerces by means of observation; an apparatus in which the techniques that make it possible to see induce effects of power."¹⁶⁹ The CPK's omnipresence as the secretive *Angkar* (its name until Pol Pot's September 1977 speech)—slogans described it as an entity that "has the many eyes of a pineapple" (*Angkar bhnaek mnās*)—ultimately enforced a culture of hypervigilance and strict obedience to party-designated behavioral and thinking norms. Pol Pot, in particular, drew from Mao's "blank page" metaphor, referring to young cadres as "soft clay" (*ṭiṭṭhan*) that was ready to be molded into whatever the party apparatus required, or as "newborns" that are bereft of filth and want.¹⁷⁰ Year Zero, as it turns out, was for DK's young and the *old people*, whose minds were not stained by corruption, consumerism, and comfortable dalliances of prerevolutionary Cambodia.

The CPK aimed to immerse DK's populace in a revolutionary culture that held the party and nation as the pinnacles of revolution and socialist construction as the goal that it was working to achieve through collective labor. The party outlined its twofold approach to establishing a "new" revolutionary culture as

follows: first, the CPK must expose and eliminate all cultural remnants from pre-revolutionary Cambodia and destroy the oppressor classes in the Party's pursuance of pure socialism; and second, the CPK must "strengthen and expand the building of revolutionary culture, literature, and art of the worker-peasant class in accordance with the Party's proletarian standpoint."¹⁷¹

On the first, and reflective of the revolutionary perpetuation dimension of the social transformation stage, an issue of *Revolutionary Flag* announced that those in the CPK ministries and offices "must be clean, particularly in the various leadership level ministries and offices. The requirement of political and ideological cleanliness is a prerogative requirement."¹⁷² At the core of revolutionary cleanliness was the elimination of "old roots," which as another article stated, "it is imperative to whip-up the people to sweep more of them clean and make things *permanently* clean."¹⁷³ The party sought to accomplish this task by educating and nurturing the people in "politics and consciousness" for them to commit themselves fully to building socialism and to bear personal witness to the "possibility of a bright future in terms of their living standards and those of the country."¹⁷⁴

On the second, the "worker-peasant masses" heard only revolutionary songs and poems that "reflect good models in the period of political/armed struggle and in the revolutionary war for national and people's liberation, in the period of national-democratic revolution, and . . . describe good models in the period of socialist revolution and the building of socialism." In education, the CPK pursued a program of "half study, half work for material production" with "no examinations and no certificates." Education was now "learning through the collective and in the concrete movement of the socialist revolution and the building of socialism in . . . cooperatives, factories, and military units." Instruction entailed organizing listening sessions wherein cadres and workers heard state-controlled Radio Phnom Penh broadcasts on "loud speakers for all important places and mobile work brigades" and watched "films of the revolutionary movement's present and past, especially the present." The people had to learn the "history of the revolutionary struggle" of the people and nation for democracy and for socialist revolution, and to "build socialism . . . [and] the Party's politics, consciousness, and organization." In 1977 the party pledged that only people with "clean backgrounds" (party-approved class origins) could serve as instructors of the CPK's messianic message and revolutionary goals of independence mastery, pure socialism, and national sovereignty.¹⁷⁵

However, a remaining issue was that traditional educators were "olds" that impeded socialist revolutionary progress and were of no use to DK. The Khmer realms' traditional intelligentsia, Buddhist monks were the most significant "olds" that the CPK sought to erase. Ironically, many of the CPK's policies

were identical to, and possibly informed by, Buddhist practices. The party had once politicized and mobilized monks for its own designs, and Pol Pot even acknowledged that monks were a cog in the CPK's moving revolutionary wheel.¹⁷⁶ He stated that monks “are the prominent people from the feudal aristocracy, the comprador capitalist class or the landlord class, who are willing to struggle to some extent against the enemy.” He listed “Samdech Penn Nouth and Samdech Sihanouk, Samdech supreme Patriarch Chou Nath of the Mohanikay Buddhist Order and the Samdech Supreme Patriarch of the Thumavuth Buddhist Order” as among those “prominent people whom we strove to rally.”¹⁷⁷

Now in DK, CPK soldiers targeted Buddhist monks and nuns in the larger plan for cultural erasure, which began almost immediately in 1975 when the CPK officially abolished Buddhism along with Islam. Soldiers ransacked and razed Buddhist temples (more than one-third of Cambodia's 3,300 pagodas), defiled and destroyed Buddha statues, and burned sacred texts. Examples of such vitriolic treatment of Buddhist iconography include a cadre who “shot the giant cement statue of the Buddha inside the temple between the eyes” and CPK cadres who converted a community temple into a “food storehouse” where pigs grazed out front.¹⁷⁸

CPK cadres also violently pushed Buddhist monks away from their usual study of classical scriptures and practices of meditation, and toward “productive” labor. Cadres murdered monks who refused to disrobe and relocate to the fields instantly. Between 1975 and 1979, the CPK defrocked and murdered thousands of monks, and killed all head ecclesiastics within the first few years of party rule.¹⁷⁹ A 1975 CPK Central Committee document boasted that “90 to 95 percent” of monks were dead, Cambodia's monasteries were now “largely abandoned,” and the “pillars of Buddhism” were “disintegrated.”¹⁸⁰ “Buddhism is dead,” claimed CPK minister of culture, Yun Yat, “and the ground has been cleared for the foundations of a new revolutionary culture.”¹⁸¹ By the regime's 1979 overthrow, nearly 65 percent of the country's *Sangha* had died from starvation, overwork, and execution, and 90 percent of Cambodia's Buddhist literary history was destroyed.¹⁸²

The Pol Pot regime's cleansing the country of “olds” extended to the party hierarchy in a purge of leading figures who held now-outdated Maoist views. “A strong Party,” one CPK document reads, “means the plan [Four-Year Plan] will be fulfilled well. . . . The Party must grasp it firmly so all over the country (we) must build up the Party.”¹⁸³ Any forces that might jeopardize the “strong Party,” and by extension the Zone and District levels, were targets for elimination. Dissenting CPK leaders soon found themselves at S-21, and as we have seen, many were victims of falling on the wrong side of Pol Pot's favor.

One such victim was Keo Meas, a high-profile CPK Central Committee member and ex-GRUNK ambassador to China. Meas had traveled with Pol Pot on his 1965–1966 trip through Hanoi to Beijing, though Meas fell ill and did not join him in the Chinese capital.¹⁸⁴ Now in the CPK Central Committee, Meas advocated for close ties with China and “applying Mao Zedong Thought to the Kampuchean situation.” This led the Pol Pot regime to consider him “traitorous” to DK, even though Pol Pot credited Mao and Mao Zedong Thought in a 1976 eulogy to the deceased Chinese leader and again a year later in Beijing. By now, Pol Pot believed that he had already applied Maoism to Cambodian realities successfully and, in so doing, created a brand new form of Marxism-Leninism that surpassed Maoism. Polpotism rendered any further homage to Maoism unnecessary and, in Pol Pot’s eyes, treasonous. He and his loyalists were hell-bent on weeding out the old “microbes,” including those who still held aloft the banner of Mao Zedong Thought rather than falling in line with Polpotism from 1976 onward.

A prime example of Keo Meas’s Maoist stance and the CPK’s Polpotist turn is a series of letters that Meas wrote during his imprisonment at S-21 in 1976. Meas’s case reveals the point when Pol Pot had so indigenized faith Maoism that to suggest lineage to the original foreign ideology was heresy; faith Maoism *was* Polpotism in form and content, its creator an original theorist who claimed uniqueness and total ownership, and his loyalists actively hostile to devotees of the original. Meas’s 25 September letter to Pol Pot captures the pre-1975 CPK Maoist line, as it declared that the CCP course “was a correct one upon which we could rely as a fall-back, and that if we didn’t fall back on it, we would be unable to detach ourselves from Viet Nam and the Soviets.” Another from 30 September lauded China as the “greatest friend of the Kampuchean people” and the “large and reliable rear fall-back of the Kampuchean and world revolution.”¹⁸⁵

The CPK revolution, Meas argued, ought to rely on the CCP “in accordance with the principles of Marxism-Leninism . . . stand[ing] firmly on [our] own forces with independence and mastery and by deciding our national destiny ourselves.” Meas urged that this was so because the Chinese revolution and Mao Zedong Thought were forerunners to the Cambodian revolutionary movement. As his final letter before his execution stated: “I have done nothing but try to learn from the lessons of the Kampuchean revolution and from the implementation of the dictatorship of the proletariat by all Parties holding power, both the lessons of their mistakes and what they have done right . . . to avoid completely their mistakes and establish good praxis, so that the revolutionary state power will not be able to change color, and so that the capitalists and the revisionists will not be able to raise their heads again. I have in particular exam-

ined the lessons of the Communist Party of China, of Chairman Mao’s analysis of the resolution of problems.”¹⁸⁶ Meas’s devotion to his ideological forebear remained resolute even when facing certain death. He declared, according to Stephen Heder, that he was “preparing slogans” as last rites before his death, among which was “Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought!” The CPK cadre responsible for executing him replied with a comment that was characteristic of the Pol Pot regime, one that stressed originality and disavowed any link to China or Mao: “This contemptible Mao who got the horrible death he deserved was worthless. You shouldn’t think, you antique bastard, that the Kampuchean Party has been influenced by Mao. Kampuchea is Kampuchea.”¹⁸⁷ Meas was executed by CPK order at Tuol Sleng in 1976.¹⁸⁸

Another Maoist intellectual Central Committee member to die because of a disagreement with Pol Pot was then DK minister of propaganda, Hu Nim, who like Yuon and Meas had ties with China. His 1965 dissertation, leadership role within the Khmer-Chinese Friendship Association, and close connection to the PRC embassy in Phnom Penh are just a few examples of his ties to Mao and Maoism; though as with his peers, ideological inspiration was not at conflict with a commitment to the CPK. Despite his prominent role within the party as one of DK’s architects and a high-ranking minister (Hu Nim was CPK spokesman in 1975), he too became a victim of Pol Pot’s purges. In late 1976, a CPK cadre named Prum Samma had given Nuon Chea, “one of the most devoted followers of Pol Pot,” reason to suspect Hu Nim of treachery.¹⁸⁹ Samma was under investigation for his past criticism of party procedures, notably avoidable deaths, the evacuations, and permanent class struggle that, to him, only created enemies. On 10 April 1977, the CPK Central Committee ordered Hu Nim’s arrest and detainment at S-21 because of Samma’s testimonial, which the party believed implicated Nim as a counterrevolutionary.

Like Hou Yuon and Keo Meas before him, Nim had some reservations about CPK policies and, in particular, had urged restraint over abolishing currency. According to unconfirmed reports, Hu Nim proposed reintroducing money to incentivize higher production yields, accepting foreign aid to alleviate the enormous burden on the working populace and “carry[ing] out democratic actions according to the democratic system.”¹⁹⁰ He also noted that Northwestern Zone Secretary Nhem Ros and CPK military commander Sao Phim agreed with his criticism of the pursuit of self-reliance without adequate machinery to improve production.¹⁹¹ As Nim, quoting Nhem Ros, described, “Now for this year 1976, the Party has assigned us the task of achieving three tons [of paddy] per hectare throughout the whole country. As for the Northwest . . . the Party has assigned us four tons per hectare. I [Hu Nim] asked brother Nhim, ‘So can you fulfill the Organization’s plan?’ Nhim immediately replied: ‘How can

we [fulfill the Super Great Leap's Plan] if there is no solution to the problem of machinery? We cannot. This is not my fault, it's the fault of the Standing Committee.'" ¹⁹² Nim is voicing his own criticism of the party's program through someone else. A reading of his dissertation supports this hypothesis because he made machinery and peasant access to tools essential to Cambodia's agricultural development, and lauded China's "Little Leap" for its amelioration of China's light industries. To include this criticism in his "confession" was, among other examples, a veiled attempt to push his own voice through the thicket of what his torturers wanted him to confess. Nim was every bit the "dedicated revolutionary" in spite of his criticisms. ¹⁹³

Hu Nim's "confession" allows for a peering through of the murkiness of CPK ideology and practice to understand how far Pol Pot went to discredit rivals and legitimize his leadership. ¹⁹⁴ Although Nim wrote it after months of torture, valuable details about the party's turn from the amorphous *Angkar* of collective leadership to the Pol Pot regime lie within its handwritten pages. Nim's "confession" is indicative of a violent, Polpotist turn in CPK policy against its membership from 1976 to 1978, and "a classic case of scapegoating" by the Central Committee. ¹⁹⁵ As Nim "confesses":

During my life, over the twenty-five years that have passed (1952–1977) I gave myself over very cheaply into the service of the enemy's activities. Strong private property habits imposed on me by the feudal and capitalist classes and the imperialists, suppressed me and made me become an enemy agent. I served the . . . CIA and the American imperialists who have now been shamefully defeated, and I have received my present fate. Over the past month and a half I have received a lot of education from the Party. I have nothing to depend on, only the Communist Party of Kampuchea. Would the Party please show clemency toward me[?] My life is completely dependent on the Party. If there is anything wrong with this report, would the Party please show clemency[?]¹⁹⁶

Reminiscent of the CPK's earlier effort to alter the consciousness of *new people*, the transformation of convicted party officials, now branded as "microbes," also had to be total. Nim gives us a glimpse of this line of policy.

What prompted this radical shift toward Polpotism and against the Maoists of yesteryear? The "turn" by Mao and his loyalists on once-trusted CCP leadership mainstays in the Cultural Revolution's later years is eerily similar to the CPK's shift from collective leadership during which Pol Pot had Yuon and Nim killed. CPK slogans demanded that "everyone must know how to do self-criticism and conduct criticism of one another" (*truv teaceh svay ditien ditien gnā*), ¹⁹⁷ and even

the onetime CPK spokesperson, Nim, had to write a lengthy “confession” at S-21 admitting to “serv[ing] the missions of the CIA and US imperialism.”¹⁹⁸

The years 1975–1976, when the CPK took power and consolidated its rule, coincided with a revitalization of Cultural Revolution rhetoric and Maoist discourse of “continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat” (*wuchan jieji zhuanzheng xia jixu geming*). The Gang of Four used this revitalization effort to rationalize the Cultural Revolution’s excesses with theoretical justification.¹⁹⁹ This had an impact on the CPK that is evident in the party’s *Revolutionary Flag* publication: “There are the revolutionary ranks . . . a power-holding layer. We must not forget it; it will be hidden. Then it will expand and strengthen as separate strata, considering itself as worker-peasant; in fact, it holds power over the worker-peasants. . . . We do not want them to expand and strengthen themselves to hold power outside of the worker-peasants . . . [lest] they will someday oppose the worker-peasants.”²⁰⁰ The difference was that the CPK’s take on the “continuous revolution” that was a fixture of the Cultural Revolution (as *jixu geming*) was an incessant campaign to identify and eradicate internal and external “enemies.” In this way, the CPK consolidation bled into social transformation (revolutionary perpetuation), albeit lacking the theoretical weight that characterized Mao’s earlier “permanent revolution.”²⁰¹

The importance of the Maoist revival for the CPK was also that many of the most noteworthy developments during this era left a lasting imprint on party policy. CCP discussions of those “old society” institutions—currency, the rank of salary, education, social distinctions, and urban environment—were all targets of Mao’s criticism over the previous two decades. By the mid-1970s, Mao had ramped up his criticism, regarding institutions such as wages as a breeding ground for capitalist roaders within the CCP. As Mao proclaimed in a 1975 issue of *Peking Review*, “Our country at present practices a commodity system; the wage system is unequal too, as in the eight-grade wage scale, and so forth. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat such things can only be restricted.”²⁰²

Gang of Four member and Maoist theoretician Zhang Chunqiao also railed against so-called bourgeois rights, and a personal communication to Cambodian head of state Norodom Sihanouk’s personal biographer, Julio Jeldres, speculates that he represents a link of sorts between late Maoist programs and DK. This source alleges that Zhang secretly visited Cambodia in 1975 to help draft DK’s constitution, though Chinese records of the visit are scarce to none.²⁰³

Regardless of whether Zhang helped shape DK’s austere policies, the CPK undoubtedly endeavored to expand on the Maoist effort and surpass in scope, ambition, and viciousness any social transformation effort that had preceded

it. Certain forms of political violence during the Cultural Revolution—forced confessions, reform through labor (*laodong laogai*), and situational anthropophagy as punishment—are similar to what happened in DK.²⁰⁴ Alongside similar forms of violent punishments, the CPK evacuated Cambodia's cities, abolished currency, religion, and all private property, eliminated salary and rank, and turned husbands against wives, and children against parents. Such measures represented the CPK's sweeping attempt to surpass the very worst of Maoist China's social transformation and elevate its own socialist program to grotesque new heights.²⁰⁵

In sum, the CPK's social transformation was one of total upheaval in which entire cities were laid bare, as CPK soldiers forced millions on a death march to rural collectives where they toiled strenuously for most of their remaining days. This included Buddhist monks, whom the party humiliated, defrocked, and forced to abandon their study of scriptures. Party leaders, too, were not exempt; former colleagues became enemies seemingly overnight. To voice dissent was a death sentence, and onetime comrades turned on each other, with Pol Pot standing firmly as supreme leader. He held the reins now and could direct the revolution along Polpotist lines.

Though Pol Pot lacked the intellectual acumen and fastidiousness of his Paris colleagues, he was the charismatic ruler wishing to be a cosmocrat whose career as a revolutionary gave his vision bona fides among followers. His vitriol toward the Vietnamese who had shunned him preyed on lingering fears of total annihilation, which the French had sown in the Khmer mind-set for decades and which informed Pol Pot's *weltanschauung*. As top officials and experts fell prey to the Pol Pot regime's *Vernichtungsschlacht*, the CPK Central Committee found itself soldiering on absent the novel premises on which it based its Maoist vision: peasant emancipation, ameliorated living standards, and industrial development. The people were instead to be totally dependent on the party, their living standards were nowhere near improved, and the country was no closer to industrialization. An estimated 1.7 million Cambodians perished during the DK years. After a foolhardy attempt to reclaim lost territory in Southern Vietnam failed mightily, the Vietnamese counterattack finally ousted Pol Pot from power. Pol Pot and his loyal band of CPK cadres fought along the Thai-Kampuchean border until an armistice in 1993.

Conclusion

The subset phases of implementation (consolidation, economic reconfiguration, and social transformation) were on full display in DK, albeit in much more

gruesome forms, as part of a concerted yet grotesque attempt to pursue an alternative modernity. Such phases converged in Cambodia as they did in China as a high-modernist response to capitalist modernization. Pol Pot implemented his faith Maoist vision and called on an unquestioning loyalty for DK that his visit to Beijing had inspired at the expense of his former colleagues. This consolidated his rule and centrality to Cambodian Communism in a manner reminiscent of the SEM and Cultural Revolution.

The party under Pol Pot also implemented its radical vision of economic reconfiguration, which like the Chinese Great Leap failed spectacularly in its quest to surpass all other rapid industrialization efforts. But unlike in China, where the Leap ended, Pol Pot pursued the rapid cultivation of agriculture at the total expense of industrial production, accepted no wrongdoing, and instead blamed outsiders, both within DK and without. CPK propagandists dehumanized others, which the Pol Pot Group viewed as a justifiable prerequisite to socialism's edification. This was an unfortunate aspect of Pol Pot's "talking back" to Maoism: a regrettable Cambodian localization of Maoism that reflected his agency in the process of adapting faith Maoism into Polpotism. The total overhaul of Cambodian society as it had existed before DK was also part of the radical party vision, with "olds," as per the Cultural Revolution rhetoric, excised by the CPK as hindrances to its revolution.

The subset phases of the CPK's implementation reveal how Mao Zedong Thought, exported as Maoism, contained useful tenets with wide applicability. Pol Pot witnessed some of these ideas as faith Maoism in practice when he visited Beijing in 1965–1966 on the cusp of the Cultural Revolution. He returned to Cambodia inspired by what he saw and was impelled to reproduce, even outdo, them in DK. Although many of the same phases of Mao's implementation are also present in DK, the actual form of CPK programs differed according to what party leaders viewed as concrete realities. The Pol Pot regime's turn against ethnic minorities and the rejection of Maoism by Pol Pot are clear, especially with the execution of Maoists Yuon and Nim. The CPK had moderate voices who, were it not for Pol Pot's extreme personality and hatred of foreigners, may have provided a rational voice to counterbalance, or even challenge the ethno-chauvinism of Polpotism that drove the genocide. Yet importantly, Pol Pot's rejection of Maoism in developing Polpotism is, in fact, *very Maoist*, as Mao had broken from applying the Soviet model of state socialism of Stalin's era in China. Like Mao's pursuit of a "Chinese road to socialism," which entailed implementing Mao Zedong Thought, Pol Pot's effort to achieve pure socialism for DK meant implementing his Polpotism in brutal practice.

Conclusion

We return to Xi Jinping's 2014 speech "Carry on the Enduring Spirit of Mao Zedong Thought," which opened this book. If there is, as Xi said so fervently, "no such thing in the world as a development model that can be applied universally, nor is there any development path that remains carved in stone," how has the Chinese experience emerged outside China?¹ Whether Xi acknowledges it or not, alternative development models and ideological systems that do away with doctrinal rigidity and instead encourage creative adaptation do exist, and I have endeavored to show that Maoism is one such model and ideological system. The book's expanded traveling theory model informed by Edward Said provides a theoretically rigorous means of analyzing the production of that ideological system as Mao Zedong Thought in China, its transmission to other countries as Maoism, and its reception by leftists who became Maoists and engaged with Maoism critically.

Xi's current effort to extend Chinese soft power (search for allies) and hard power and to posit the PRC as the leader of a world liberation movement represents an important outgrowth of this production, transmission, and reception effort in different ways. Although Mao championed the export of the Chinese revolution to the world, he was not the first to encourage the notion that the Chinese experience had universal applicability and lessons for the world's peoples.² The idea and practice of exporting the Chinese experience outside China is a continuous theme in modern Chinese history that is not

limited to Maoism, and as Xi's speech suggests, it will continue to remain so under the current CCP leadership and beyond.

Xi is offering a Chinese model, albeit with the proviso that it should not be treated as an unchanging "universal." It is worth revisiting the three components that Xi mentions in his pronouncement to clarify just what he is proposing. The first component, Mao's reinvigoration of the saying "seek truth from facts," reflects the reception of the traveling theory in Mao's thought. Maoism, as this book has shown, is itself a product of the same tripartite process of traveling theory. Mao's formulation reflects the Janus-faced nature of his reception of foreign thought. To "seek truth from facts," Mao drew on this classical phrase from his Confucian teachers to convey the empirical spirit of Marxist historical materialism and Leninist practical administration.³ Thus it is important to track the three stages of production, transmission, and reception to understand more fully how ideas travel and how individuals receive them in a dialectical engagement with that idea or thought and, ultimately, reinvest or revivify it with new signification.

The Cambodia case, likewise, sheds light on this complex interplay between the universality of Marxism-Leninism and the social experiences of political actors. This includes their education in colonial schools, the language of their colonizers, and travels abroad to gain knowledge, all of which tempered how they received foreign radical thought and adapted it according to their present situations. As nationalist, then leftist, students, Pol Pot, Hou Yuon, and Hu Nim forged networks at home and abroad. In the process, they recognized shared features with other underdeveloped countries, most notably capitalist exploitation, semicolonialism, semifeudalism, and political corruption. Such discoveries for them contributed to a new sense of situated-ness. The Cambodian Paris Group studied French classics in French-language schools, then pursued advanced degrees in the avant-garde hotbed of 1950s Paris. Their studies led some to become revolutionaries (Pol Pot), whereas others became Maoist theoreticians and politicians who served as the CPK intellectual thrust (Hou Yuon and Hu Nim). In China and Cambodia, these experiences and encounters at home and abroad shaped how they received and adapted foreign radical thought to suit what each intellectual viewed as the concrete conditions and historical realities in their respective polities.

The second foundational element of Mao Zedong Thought that Xi lists is the mass line, which he describes as "the Party's lifeline and fundamental principle. . . . The people are the creators of history."⁴ In fact, the mass line is the "discovery of concrete methods for linking popular participation in the guerrilla struggle with a wide ranging community attack on rural problems."⁵ In theory dating back to the 1920s, the CCP applied the mass line as

its methodology in 1943 to encourage cadres to “listen to the masses and implement policies in accordance with popular will.” Upon hearing peasants’ grievances, CCP cadres had to be discerning in identifying “correct ideas” and to help the masses grasp them in “systematic form.”⁶ Although contradictory as an amalgam of vertical centralism with voluntary mass participation, the mass line sought to “elicit voluntary and informed support” rather than unquestioned compliance. The CCP’s aim with this methodology was to offer an “interpretive framework through which people could see the ‘facts’ and ‘truths’ they already knew in a fresh light.”⁷

Mao’s approach to Marxist analysis of society sought to accomplish the same in placing primacy on practice, for it is “the resolution of contradictions in material life *as experienced by individuals* that drives Maoist dialectics (the reality of contradictions in the world and how to face them).”⁸ The second pillar of Maoism represents Mao’s intellectual adaptation of Marxism into a practical system to address on a genuine level the multitude of issues that rural workers and peasants knew of, and faced, in their daily lives. This is one facet of a larger ideological system of Maoism. Mao’s intellectual adaptation of Marxism-Leninism to fit the Chinese revolution’s concrete conditions brought to light for other Maoists the importance of creative application according to a revolution’s particular situation. Paris Group members Yuon and Nim engaged with Maoism in their economics dissertations. Although their intellectual engagements did not result in enduring and successful practice because Sihanouk’s repression forced them out of Cambodian politics by 1967, they continued to engage with Maoism as full-fledged guerrillas and, then, whence in power in 1975.

The third and final component of Xi Jinping’s speech iterates some of Mao’s most important contributions during the Yan’an period (1936–1948). Mao’s notion of self-reliance, or as Xi phrases it, to “follow our own path . . . to go our own way,” recalls China’s uncompromising position vis-à-vis its own independence.⁹ Xi then quotes Mao directly: “‘Facts’ are all the things that exist objectively, ‘truth’ means their internal relations, that is, the laws governing them, and ‘to seek’ means to study.’ [Mao] also used the metaphor ‘shooting the arrow at the target,’ that is, we should shoot the ‘arrow’ of Marxism at the ‘target’ of China’s revolution, modernization drive, and reform.”¹⁰ In making this rhetorical homage, Xi reinforces that to be practical, an idea or ideological discourse requires careful application, which, consciously or unconsciously, brings to light the complex interplay of extant and foreign, universal and particular. This interplay is at the crux of normative adaptation.

As the Cambodia case shows, Communists rendered Maoism congruent with contemporary norms by making abstract terms and ideas transcendent

through linking them to real-life grievances and concepts that constituents understood and on which they might mobilize. Leninist organizations like the CCP and CPK combined charismatic-impersonal with rational-bureaucratic/status-classificatory features. Each were also led by a charismatic leader who oscillated between revolutionary commitments and the organization's need to recruit new members from a strata to which leaders had limited, if any, prior exposure. Cambodian radical intellectuals found ways to reach new groups of people in their larger efforts to create a mass national party either through allusions to Buddhist norms in party slogans or by recruiting monks. But underneath the glossy veneer of the all-knowing *Angkar* was something truly insidious: CPK leaders and propagandists claimed omnipresence and omniscience as a display of the *Angkar*'s awesome might. The "perfect disciplinary apparatus would make it possible for a single gaze to see everything."¹¹ Although the party assumed a faceless character when it took power, it supervised everything and exercised its disciplinary power by way of total invisibility. This was the motivation behind its terrifying slogans "The *Angkar* has [the many] eyes of the pineapple" (*Angkar bhnaek mnās*) and "Comrades, the *Angkar* already knows your entire biography!" (*Angkar tññ pravattirup mitt as'hoey*).¹²

China and Cambodia provide examples of the implementation of Maoism, but something must be said of this stage of the expanded traveling theory model (reception, adaptation, implementation). In both instances, the charismatic leader consolidated rule around himself and his thought, enacted sweeping economic reconfigurations to combat widening social inequality and postindependence issues of underdevelopment, and initiated cataclysmic social transformation programs to crush potential enemies and salvage revolutionary gains. Both cases fit neatly together, especially because Mao's implementation of his vision in China influenced the CPK and its designs for DK.

Yet the Cambodian case provides an example of continuity with rupture. Pol Pot consolidated rule around himself and his thought, but he eliminated his former Paris Group colleagues for even the slightest dissent. The CPK's economic reconfiguration program, the Super Great Leap Forward, never made progress in industrializing DK, and instead focused entirely on aggressive agricultural cultivation. The party's program of social transformation (revolutionary perpetuation), which we know colloquially as Year Zero, sought to erase all prior history, non-Khmer ethnic groups, and those whom the party deemed as "new people" or "Khmer Bodies with Vietnamese Minds." Although the processes of implementation occurred in both China and Cambodia, and the former case inspired the latter, the way that their implementations played out took on the characteristics and features of their respective leaders, whose charismatic personalities tempered their visions' realization in actual policies.

Importantly, the expanded traveling theory model allows one to see Maoism not in isolation but as part of a dialectical process. Encounters and experiences shape how intellectuals receive, practice, and adapt Maoism, and how and why they marshal such productions into something that speaks to people beyond tight-knit intellectual circles. I have argued that the expanded model positions one well to track the genealogies of Maoism's emergence outside China and to highlight how and why some ideas travel, are received, adapted, and implemented in some places, in certain ways, and produce certain outcomes. Despite massive shortcomings and catastrophic consequences, Chinese Communist policies like the Great Leap had reverberations far removed from China and decades after their initiation. Maoist disciple Pol Pot implemented a phase of economic reconfiguration that drew exclusively from the wellspring of the Great Leap. Its aim, according to party materials, was to transform DK rapidly into a state free from foreign intervention and entirely dependent on its own resources. The CPK's Super Great Leap Forward, however, sought to go much further than Mao had gone and deviated significantly in the realm of industrial development.

The expanded model also allows one to recognize social experiences and lived culture as moderating variables that help explain why certain ideas emerge and where, as well as why those ideas took root among groups in crises. The networked intellectuals under examination took different routes to their radicalization and did not always engage Marxism, Marxism-Leninism, and Maoism in the same way. But they still regarded these ideological discourses as worth engaging and, in some instances, embraced their core features. The processes of syntheses between cultural and political theories from outside China and Cambodia thus deserve considerable attention as we continue to explore traveling ideas, especially radical ones, across eras of globalization.

We return to Philip Kuhn's findings regarding the origins of Hong Xiuquan's Taiping vision. As he concludes, the "perfection of the 'fit'" between the words of Liang A-fa and the nature of Hakka society was what led to the Taiping vision's reception outside of Hong's immediate social milieu. The "imperfection of the 'fit'" with Chinese culture—namely, the novel Christian elements—initiated such a change.¹³ The same is true to some extent with Maoism. Cambodian radical intellectuals engaged with Mao's works yet did not become full-fledged Maoists initially. Only when crises became unavoidable, and their initial intellectual and practical adaptations could not be realized via a political route, did Maoism as revolutionary practice become for them the shining beacon to guide their Communist movement to state power. The "imperfection" of Maoism's fit in Cambodian society prompted further engagement, which led to

significant adaptation as in Mao's engagement of Marxism-Leninism in the Chinese revolution.

The "perfection" of Maoism's fit to fill in the ideological and practical gaps for radicals such as Pol Pot helped them make sense of their own country's plight at the hands of global capitalist exploitation and recognize shared conditions across Third World nations. But as with the Taiping vision, it was the imperfection of the fit and the necessity of adapting it practically and normatively that led to the production of a new variant according to new realities. That in itself did not fit with objective conditions in Cambodia. The CPK's attempt to force society to conform to its ideology eventually led Cambodia down the path of disaster.

GLOSSARY OF KEY SELECTED TERMS

Chinese

<i>English</i>	<i>Pinyin</i>	<i>Chinese</i>
agrarian revolution	<i>tudi geming</i>	土地革命
“anti-rash advance”	<i>Fan maojin</i>	反冒進
Anti-Rightist campaign	<i>Fanyou yundong</i>	反右運動
Asian, African, and Latin America Training Centre	<i>Ya-Fei-La peixun zhongxin</i>	亞非拉培訓中心
base areas	<i>genjudi</i>	根據地
Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries	<i>Zhenya fangeming yundong</i>	鎮壓反革命運動
CCP International Liaison Department	<i>Zhongguo gongchandang zhongyang duiwai lianluo</i>	中國共產黨中央對外聯絡
CCP Northeast Bureau	<i>Zhonggong zhongyang dongbeiju</i>	中共中央東北局
Central Propaganda Department	<i>zhongxuanbu</i>	中宣部
Chinese Soviet Republic	<i>Zhonghua suwei'ai gongheguo</i>	中華蘇維埃共和國
chronological biographies	<i>nianpu</i>	年譜
classified in perpetuity	<i>yongjiu baomi</i>	永久保密
close comrade-in-arms	<i>Qinmi zhanyou</i>	親密戰友

continuous revolution	<i>jixu geming</i>	繼續革命
Criticize Deng, Counterattack the Right-Deviationist Reversal-of-Verdicts Trend	<i>Pi-Deng, fanji youqing fan'an feng</i>	批鄧、反擊右傾翻案風
Criticize Lin, Criticize Confucius movement	<i>Pi-Lin, pi-Kong yundong</i>	批林批孔運動
double-ten directive	<i>shuangshi zhishi</i>	雙十指示
Draft Land Reform Law	<i>tudi gaigefa cao'an</i>	土地改革法草案
"export revolution to the world"	<i>xiang shijie shuchu geming</i>	向世界輸出革命
Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence	<i>heping gongchu wuxiang yuanze</i>	和平共處五項原則
Foreign Languages Press	<i>Waiwen chubanshe</i>	外文出版社
Former Ten Points	<i>Qian shitiao</i>	前十條
Four Cleanups	<i>Siqing yundong</i>	四清運動
Four Olds	<i>siji</i>	四舊
Gang of Four	<i>Sirenbang</i>	四人幫
Great Leap Forward	<i>Dayuejin</i>	大躍進
Hundred Flowers campaign	<i>Baihua qifang</i>	百花齊放
impregnable fortress	<i>Tongqiang tiebi</i>	銅牆鐵壁
International Bookstore	<i>Guoji tushu</i>	國際圖書
Land Reform	<i>Tugai</i>	土改
Land Reform Law	<i>tudi gaigefa</i>	土地改革法
"Land under Heaven"	<i>tianxia</i>	天下
Later Ten Points	<i>Hou shitiao</i>	後十條
Lin Biao Incident	<i>Lin Biao shijian</i>	林彪事件
low-middle peasants	<i>xia zhongnong</i>	下中農
magic weapon	<i>da fabao</i>	大法寶
mandate of heaven	<i>tianming</i>	天命

Mao Zedong Thought	<i>Mao Zedong sixiang</i>	毛澤東思想
mass line	<i>qunzhong luxian</i>	群眾路線
mid-middle peasants	<i>zhong zhongnong</i>	中中農
mutual aid teams	<i>huzhuzu</i>	互助組
New Enlightenment Movement	<i>xin qimeng yundong</i>	新啟蒙運動
New Philosophy	<i>xin zhexue</i>	新哲學
official propaganda outlet under the CCP	<i>shishi xinming yu Zhongguo dashiguande xuanchuan meiti</i>	事事听命於中國大使館的宣傳媒體
overseas Chinese	<i>huaqiao</i>	華僑
Peking Review	<i>Beijing zhoubao</i>	北京週報
People's Daily	<i>Renmin ribao</i>	人民日報
permanent revolution	<i>buduan geming</i>	不斷革命
Red Flag/ Red Flag Weekly	<i>Hongqi/ Hongqi zhoubao</i>	紅旗/紅旗週報
Red Guards	<i>hong weibing</i>	紅衛兵
reducing rent and interest	<i>jianzu jianxi</i>	減租減息
reeducation through labor	<i>laodong jiaoyang</i>	勞動教養
reform through labor	<i>laodong laogai</i>	勞動勞改
self-criticism	<i>ziwo piping</i>	自我批評
7,000 Cadre Conference	<i>Qiqian ren dahui</i>	七千人大會
Sino-Khmer Daily	<i>Mianhua ribao</i>	棉華日報
Socialist Education Movement	<i>Shehuizhuyi jiaoyu yundong</i>	社會主義教育運動
state's peasants	<i>guojiade nongmin</i>	國家的農民
Struggle Session	<i>Pidou dahui</i>	批鬥大會
Three- and Five-Antis	<i>Sanfan wufan</i>	三反五反
"three freedoms and one guarantee"	<i>sanzi yibao</i>	三自一包
three worlds theory	<i>sange shijiede lilun</i>	三個世界的理論

“to seek truth from facts”	<i>shishi qiushi</i>	實事求是
tournament system	<i>jinbiaosai tizhi</i>	錦標賽體制
Twenty-Three Points	<i>Ershisantiao</i>	二十三條
“unity of knowledge and practice”	<i>zhixing heyi</i>	知行合一
virtuousness/morality	<i>de</i>	德
volunteer	<i>ziyuan</i>	自願
wealthy middle peasants	<i>fuyu zhongnong</i>	富裕中農
wealthy peasants	<i>funong</i>	富農
Yan'an Rectification movement	<i>Yan'an zhengfeng yundong</i>	延安整風運動

Khmer

<i>English</i>	<i>Saveros Lewitz</i>	<i>Khmer</i>
Angkor Wat		អង្គរវត្ត
Buddhist community	<i>Prah Sangha</i>	ព្រះសង្ឃ
Cambodian Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Krasuon Kārpades Kampuchea	ក្រសួងការបរទេសកម្ពុជា
Cambodia under French colonization	<i>Prades Kampuchea Krom Ānānigam Bārān</i>	ប្រទេសកម្ពុជាក្រោមអាណានិគមបារាំង
commune chief	<i>Meghum</i>	មេឃុំ
Communist Party of Kampuchea	Paks Kummuyñist Kampuchea	បក្សកុម្មុយនីស្តកម្ពុជា
The Cooperative Question	<i>Pañhā Sahakar(្រ)</i>	បញ្ហាសហករណ៍
Corruption	<i>bukraluoy</i>	ពុករលួយ
Democratic Party	Krum Prajādhipeyy <i>devarāja</i>	ក្រុមប្រជាធិបតេយ្យ ទេវរាជា
district chief	<i>Cauhvāysruk</i>	ចៅហ្វាយស្រុក
education halls	<i>Sālā Ab'ram</i>	សាលាអប់រំ

Free Khmers	<i>Khmer Serī</i>	ខ្មែរសេរី
General Association of Khmer Students	<i>Samāgam Nissit Khmer</i>	សមាគមនិស្សិតខ្មែរ
Government	<i>raṭhābhibāl, rajkāṛ</i>	រដ្ឋាភិបាល, រជការ
Great Lake	<i>Tonlé Sap</i>	ទន្លេសាប
Great Master Buddha Praḥ Buddparamagrū		ព្រះពុទ្ធបរមគ្រូ
herd of slaves	<i>khñuṃge</i>	ខ្ញុំគេ
“hidden enemies burrowing from within”	<i>khmān pañkap’ si ruñ phdae knuñ</i>	ខ្មាំងបង្កប់ស៊ីវងផ្ទៃក្នុង
Honorary Red Flag	<i>Dañ’kraham kittiyas</i>	ទង់ក្រហមកិត្តិយស
Hou Yuen		ហ៊ូ យ៉ុង
Hu Nim		ហ្គូ នីម
Ieng Sary		អៀង សារី
independence-mastery	<i>aeḱarājy mcās’kār</i>	ឯករាជ្យម្ចាស់ការ
Independent Khmers	<i>Khmer Issarak</i>	ខ្មែរឥស្សរៈ
Indochinese Communist Party	<i>Gaṇapaks Kummuyñist Īṇḍūcin</i>	គណបក្សកុម្មុយនីស្តឥណ្ឌូចិន
Jayavarman VII		ជ័យវរ្ម័នទី៧
Keng Vannsak		កេង វ៉ាន់សាក់
Keo Meas		កែវ មាស
Khieu Samphan		ខៀវ សំផន
Khmer-Chinese Friendship Association	<i>Samāgam Mittphāp Khmer-Chin</i>	សមាគមមិត្តភាពខ្មែរ-ចិន
Khmer People’s Revolutionary Party	<i>Gaṇapaks Prajājan Paṭivatt Kampuchea</i>	គណបក្សប្រជាជនបដិវត្តន៍កម្ពុជា
Khmer Student	<i>Khemara Nissit</i>	ខេមរានិស្សិត
“life-and-death contradictions”	<i>domṇeās’ slāp’ ros’</i>	ទំនាស់ស្លាប់រស់
Lord	<i>Samdech</i>	សម្តេច
low-and-high-level cooperatives	<i>Sahakara(ៗ) Kamritdāp/khas’</i>	សហករណ៍កម្រិតទាប/ខ្ពស់

Monarchy or Democracy?	<i>Rājādhipṭeyy</i> <i>ṛ Prajādhipṭeyy?</i>	រាជាធិបតេយ្យ ឬ ប្រជាធិបតេយ្យ?
mutual aid teams	<i>Krumpravās'tai</i>	ក្រុមប្រវាស់ដៃ
<i>Nagaravatta</i>		នគរវត្ត
National United Front of Kampuchea	<i>Raṇasirs</i> <i>Ruopruomjāti</i> Kampuchea	រណសិរ្សរួបរួមជាតិកម្ពុជា
new people	<i>Anakthmī</i>	អ្នកថ្មី
The Nationalist	<i>Anakjātiniyam</i>	អ្នកជាតិនិយម
National Religion	<i>Sāsnājāti</i>	សាសនាជាតិ
Norodom Sihanouk		នរោត្តម សីហនុ
Norodom Suramarit		នរោត្តម សុរាម្រិត
Nuon Chea		នួន ជា
old/base people	<i>Anakmūlthān</i>	អ្នកមូលដ្ឋាន
Organization / Revolutionary Organization	<i>Angkar /</i> <i>Angkar Paṭivatt</i>	អង្គការ/អង្គការបដិវត្ត
Original Khmer	<i>Khmer Toem</i>	ខ្មែរដើម
Oudong	<i>Uṭuṅg</i>	ឧដុង្គ
ox	<i>chlūv</i>	ឆ្ន័វ
pagoda	<i>vat</i>	វត្ត
People's Group	<i>Krum Prajājon</i>	ក្រុមប្រជាជន
Phouk Chhay		ភោគឆាយ
police	<i>nogorbāl</i>	នគរបាល
Popular Socialist Community	<i>Saṅgam Rāstr</i> <i>Niyam</i>	សង្គមរាស្ត្រនិយម
Red Flag	<i>Dañ'kraham</i>	ទង់ក្រហម
Red Light	<i>Rasmīkraham</i>	រស្មីក្រហម
Region	<i>tampan'</i>	តំបន់
Revolutionary Flag	<i>Dañ'paṭivatt</i>	ទង់បដិវត្ត
Revolutionary Youth	<i>Yuvañan Yuvañārī</i> <i>Paṭivatt</i>	យុវជនយុវនារីបដិវត្ត

Royal Government of the National Union of Kampuchea	Rājraṭhābhipāl Ruopruomjāti Kampuchea	រាជរដ្ឋាភិបាលរូបរួមជាតិកម្ពុជា
Royal Khmer University	Sākalvidyālay Bhūmind Khmer	សាកលវិទ្យាល័យភូមិន្ទខ្មែរ
Saloth Sar (birth name of Pol Pot)		សាឡុត ស
Santebal (“Keeper of the Peace”) security	<i>Santibāl</i> <i>santisukh</i>	សន្តិបាល សន្តិសុខ
“17 April Group”	<i>Buok</i> <i>Ṭap’prāmbīrmesā</i>	ពួកដប់ប្រាំពីរមេសា
Sisowath Monivong		ស៊ីសុវត្ថិ មុនីវង្ស
Sisowath Yuthevonḡ		ស៊ីសុវត្ថិ យុត្តិវង្ស
soft clay	<i>ṭiṭḥdan’</i>	ដីតង្វែង
Soldiers	<i>Bal</i>	ពល
Son Ngoc Thanh		សឹង ង៉ុកថាញ់
Suryavarman II		សូរ្យវរ្ម័នទី២
Suong Sikœun		សួងស៊ីគឿន
Worker’s Party of Kampuchea	Gaṇapaks Balakar Kampuchea	គណបក្សពលករកម្ពុជា

NOTES

Introduction

1. Mao and the Chinese Communists were precise in their wording and decided against codifying the body of theory produced by Mao as an ism (*zhuyi*), preferring instead “Mao Zedong Thought.” This book refers to Mao’s ideology as Maoism in reference to Mao Zedong Thought outside China and as Mao Zedong Thought within China.

2. The *Book of Han (Hanshu)* is also known as the *History of the Former Han*. See Ban Gu and Ban Zhao, *The History of the Former Han Dynasty*, 3 vols., trans. Homer H. Dubs (Baltimore: Waverly, 1938–1955)

3. Xi Jinping, “Carry on the Enduring Spirit of Mao Zedong Thought,” in *The Governance of China* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 2014), 27; and “Guanyu jianguo yilai dangde ruoganlishi wenti jueyi” [Resolution on certain questions in the history of our party since the founding of the People’s Republic of China], 27 June 1981, *Communist Party of China—People’s Daily Online* <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64162/71380/71387/71588/4854598.html>.

4. Xi, “Carry on the Enduring Spirit,” 31.

5. Xi Jinping, “Xi Jinping zai ‘Yidai Yilu’ guojihezuo gaofeng luntan kaimu shis-hangde yanjiang” [President Xi Jinping’s speech at the opening ceremony of the Belt and Road International Cooperation Forum], 14 May 2017, *Xinhua News Agency* http://www.xinhuanet.com/2017-05/14/c_1120969677.htm.

6. For a discussion of this phenomenon by a scholar of comparative literature and critical cultural theory, see Liu Kang, “Maoism: Revolutionary Globalism for the Third World Revisited,” in “Global Maoism and Cultural Revolution in the Global Context,” special issue, *Comparative Literature Studies* 52, no. 1 (2015): 12–28.

7. Nick Knight, “The Form of Mao Zedong’s ‘Sinification of Marxism,’” *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, no. 9 (January 1983): 18. See also Nick Knight, *Rethinking Mao: Explorations in Mao Zedong Thought* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 197–216.

8. Pol Pot is an alliterative nom de guerre (combination of his first alias, Ta Pouk, from 1967 in Ratanakiri, with his second alias, Ta Pol). Henri Locard, personal communication to author, 1 November 2020.

9. On scientific shifts as “responses to crises” instead of progress toward finding truths, see Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 68–91.

10. I follow the convention of using given names when referring to Cambodians by a shortened name.

11. On this point, I agree with Arif Dirlik, *Marxism in the Chinese Revolution* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), 97–100; and with Knight, *Rethinking Mao*, 199.

12. Saloth Sar (aka. Pol Pot), “Rājādhipateyy ī Prajādhipateyy?” [Monarchy or democracy?], *Khemara Nissit* [Khmer Student], no. 14 (August 1952): 39–47, signed “Original Khmer” (*Khmer Toem*), Documentation Center of Cambodia (DCCAM), No. D00084.

13. Hou Yuon, “La paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernization” [The Cambodian peasantry and its prospects for modernization] (PhD diss., Sorbonne Université, 1955); Hu Nim, “Les services publics économiques au Cambodge” [The economic public services of Cambodia] (PhD diss., Université Royale Khmère / *Sākalvidyālay Bhūmind Khmer*, 1965).

14. On the Yan’an period (1936–1948), see Dirlik, *Marxism in the Chinese Revolution*, 78–86.

15. Pol Pot, “Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot, secrétaire du comité du parti communiste du Kampuchéa au meeting commémorant le 17^e anniversaire de la fondation du parti communiste du Kampuchéa et à l’occasion de la proclamation solennelle de l’existence officielle du parti communiste de Kampuchéa” [Speech by comrade Pol Pot, secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kampuchea, at a meeting commemorating the seventeenth anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of Kampuchea and on the occasion of the solemn proclamation of the official existence of the Communist Party of Kampuchea], Phnom Penh, 27 September 1977, 3, 16, 75.

16. Edward Said, *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 226–247.

17. Chen Jian, *Mao’s China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 3, 145.

18. Michael H. Hunt, *The Genesis of Chinese Communist Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 220–221; Qiang Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950–1975* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 183–190; Qiang Zhai, “Zhong-Jian teshu guanxidexingcheng (1954–1965)” [The formation of the “special relationship” between China and Cambodia (1954–1965)], *Nanyang wenti yanjiu* [Southeast Asian Affairs], no. 1 (2013): 1–17; Wang Chenyi, “The Chinese Communist Party’s Relationship with the Khmer Rouge in the 1970s: An Ideological Victory and a Strategic Failure” (Working Paper 88, Cold War International History Project, Washington, DC, 2018), 12–13; Sophie Richardson, *China, Cambodia, and the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 102–119, 123–124.

19. Ang Cheng Guan, *Ending the Vietnam War: The Vietnamese Communists’ Perspective* (London: Routledge, 2004), 45; Richardson, *China, Cambodia, and the Five Principles*, 49–53.

20. Suong Sikœun, *Itinéraire d’un intellectuel Khmer Rouge* [Itinerary of a Khmer Rouge intellectual] (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2013), 57; Sacha Sher, “Le parcours politique des ‘Khmers Rouges’: Formation, édification, projet et pratiques: 1945–1978” [The political journey of the ‘Khmer Rouge’: Training, construction, project and practices, 1945–1978] (PhD diss., Université Paris-Nanterre, 2003), 78, 121.

21. David Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History: Politics, War, and Revolution since 1945* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), 347. The French edition was titled *Citations du Président Mao Tsetoung* (Beijing: Editions en langues étrangères, 1966). The CCP never released a Khmer-language edition.

22. Philip Short, *Pol Pot: The History of a Nightmare* (London: John Murray, 2004), 179–180.

23. On ideological system as a concept, see Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 220. On social practice in ideological formation, see Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, trans. Louis Wirth and Edward Shils (1929; repr., San Diego, CA: Harcourt, 1985), 50. On ideology's material existence, see Louis Althusser, "Idéologie et appareils idéologiques d'État (Notes pour une recherche)" [Ideology and ideological state apparatuses (Notes toward an investigation)], *La Pensée* 151 (1970): 3–38; and Slavoj Žižek, *The Plague of Fantasies* (London: Verso, 1997), 167.

24. Raymond Wylie uses "ideological system" to refer to then-recent CCP aims at doctrinal purity, but he does not elaborate on its conceptual meaning. Raymond Wylie, *The Emergence of Maoism: Mao Tse-tung, Chen Po-ta, and the Search for Chinese Theory* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1980), 2. Nick Knight also uses "ideological system" to describe Marxism's realization in national form. Knight, "The Form of Mao Zedong's 'Sinification of Marxism,'" 27–30.

25. Fabio Lanza, "Global Maoism," in *Afterlives of Chinese Communism: Political Concepts from Mao to Xi*, ed. Christian Sorace, Ivan Franceschini, and Nicholas Loubere (Canberra, Australia: ANU Press and Verso Books, 2019), 85. See also Matthew Galway, "Boundless Revolution: Global Maoism and Communist Movements in South-east Asia, 1949–1979" (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2017). For another description, see Julia Lovell, *Maoism: A Global History* (London: Bodley Head, 2019), 23–24.

26. Samir Amin, *The Future of Maoism*, trans. Norman Finkelstein (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1981), 145–146.

27. Fabio Lanza, *The End of Concern: Maoist China, Activism, and Asian Studies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017), 10, 20.

28. Said, *World, the Text, and the Critic*, 226–247; Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1936); Alasdair Macintyre, "Incommensurability, Truth, and the Conversation between Confucians and Aristotelians about the Virtues," in *Culture and Modernity: East-West Philosophic Perspectives*, ed. Eliot Deutsch, 105–118 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989); Arnd Schneider, "On 'Appropriation': A Critical Reappraisal of the Concept and Its Application in Global Art Practices," *Social Anthropology* 11 (2003): 224; Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," *Theory, Culture, & Society* 7 (1990): 295; Jeremy Prestholdt, "Similitude and Empire: On Comorian Strategies of Englishness," *Journal of World History* 18, no. 2 (2007): 114–116.

29. Said, *World, the Text, and the Critic*, 226.

30. Philip Kuhn, "Origins of the Taiping Vision: Cross-Cultural Dimensions of a Chinese Rebellion," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 19, no. 3 (July 1977): 350, 364–366.

31. Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, trans. Ephraim Fischhoff, Hans Gerth, A. M. Henderson, Ferdinand Kolegar, C. Wright Mills,

Talcott Parsons, Max Rheinstein, Guenther Roth, Edward Shils, and Claus Wittich (New York: Bedminster Press, 1968), 3:1122.

32. Kenneth Jowitt, *New World Disorder: The Leninist Extinction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 2, 11, 18–19, 43.

33. Timothy Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao's China: Deng Tuo and the Intelligentsia* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997), 3, 10–15.

34. Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao's China*, 69.

35. Edward Said, *Representations of the Intellectual: The 1993 Reith Lectures* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 12–13.

36. Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 156–158.

37. Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze, “The Intellectuals and Power,” *Telos* 16 (1972–1973): 104.

38. Charles Kurzman and Lynn Owens, “The Sociology of Intellectuals,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 28 (2002): 70.

39. Richard Salter, “Time, Authority, and Ethics in the Khmer Rouge: Elements of the Millennial Vision in Year Zero,” in *Millennialism, Persecution, and Violence: Historical Cases*, ed. Catherine Wessinger (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 292–293. On the idea of a *devarāja* (god-king), see O. W. Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region in Southeast Asian Perspectives* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 1999), 20–23, 58.

40. Jowitt, *New World Disorder*, 13, citing Weber, *Economy and Society*, 3:1122.

41. Roderick MacFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 459–462.

42. Wylie offered *The Emergence of Maoism* in 1980 as one possible explanation, but not all accept his conclusions.

43. Timothy Cheek, ed., *A Critical Introduction to Mao* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 4.

44. Dirlik, *Marxism in the Chinese Revolution*, 7, 99.

45. On the oppositional stances of Mao scholars Stuart Schram and Nick Knight, see Knight, *Rethinking Mao*, 27–29, 54–62; and Galway, “Boundless Revolution,” 42.

46. Lanza, *End of Concern*, 10, 20. For other examples, see Taj Robeson Frazier, *The East Is Black: Cold War China in the Black Radical Imagination* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014); Alexander Cook, ed., *Mao's Little Red Book: A Global History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Bill V. Mullen and Fred Ho, *Afro Asia: Revolutionary Political and Cultural Connections between African Americans and Asian Americans* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008); Matthew Johnson, “From Peace to the Panthers: PRC Engagement with African-American Transnational Networks, 1949–1979,” *Past and Present* 218, supplement 8 (2013): 233–257; and Arif Dirlik, Paul Healy, and Nick Knight, eds., *Critical Perspectives on Mao Zedong's Thought* (Atlantic Heights, NJ: Humanities Press, 1997), part 3.

47. Huynh Kim Khanh, *Vietnamese Communism, 1925–1945* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), 20–21.

48. Lanza, *End of Concern*, 7; Liu, “Maoism.”

49. David Chandler, *Brother Number One: A Political Biography of Pol Pot*, rev. ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1999), 3. On the CPK's self-identification as Marxists-Leninist, see Michael Vickery, *Cambodia: 1975–1982* (Boston: South End Press, 1984), 288–289; Ben

Kiernan and Chanthou Boua, eds., *Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea, 1942–1981* (London: Zed Press, 1982), iii, 180–181, 228–229; Craig Etcheson, *The Rise and Demise of Democratic Kampuchea* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984), 164; Karl Jackson, “Intellectual Origins of the Khmer Rouge,” in *Cambodia 1975–1978: Rendezvous with Death*, ed. Karl Jackson (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 241–250; Ben Kiernan, “External and Indigenous Sources of Khmer Rouge Ideology,” in *The Third Indochina War: Conflict between China, Vietnam, and Cambodia, 1972–79*, ed. Odd Arne Westad and Sophie Quinn-Judge (New York: Routledge, 2006), 200–202; and Stephen J. Morris, *Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia: Political Culture and the Causes of War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), 17.

50. Sacha Sher, *Le Kampuchéa des “Khmers rouges”: Essai de compréhension d’une tentative de révolution* [Kampuchea of the “Khmer Rouge”: An attempt to understand a revolutionary effort] (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2004).; Sher, “Le parcours politique des ‘Khmers Rouges,’” 128–151; Henri Locard, *Pourquoi les Khmers Rouges?* [Why the Khmer Rouge?] (Paris: Vendémaire, 2013), 30–52.

51. See Han Suyin, *The Morning Deluge: Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Revolution, 1893–1954* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1972).

52. See Frank Dikotter, *Mao’s Great Famine* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010).

53. Guofang daxue dangshi dangjian jiaoyanshi, ed., *Wenhua dageming yanjiu ziliao* [Research materials on the Great Cultural Revolution] (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun guofang daxue dangshi dangjian zhenggong jiaoyanshi, 1988), 2:650–657.

54. Such a portrayal is criticized in Gregor Benton and Lin Chun, eds., *Was Mao Really a Monster? The Academic Response to Chang and Halliday’s Mao: The Unknown Story* (London: Routledge, 2010), 1. See also Chang Jung and Jon Halliday, *Mao: The Untold Story* (New York: Knopf Doubleday, 2011).

55. Lovell, *Maoism*, 150.

56. Stephen R. Heder, *Cambodian Communism and the Vietnamese Model*, vol. 1, *Imitation and Independence, 1930–1975* (Bangkok: White Lotus, 2004), 2, 8. Although not in total disagreement with my contention, see also Sikeun, *Itinéraire d’un intellectuel Khmer Rouge*, 39–41; Short, *Pol Pot*, 290; Dmitry Mosyakov, “The Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese Communists: A History of Their Relations as Told in the Soviet Archives,” in *Genocide in Cambodia and Rwanda: New Perspectives*, ed. Susan E. Cook (2006; repr., London and New York: Routledge, 2017), 41–72.

57. See Eiji Murashima, “The Young Nuon Chea in Bangkok (1942–1950) and the Communist Party of Thailand: The Life in Bangkok of the Man Who Became ‘Brother No. 2’ in the Khmer Rouge,” *Journal of Asia-Pacific Studies*, no. 12 (March 2009): 1–42.

58. Andrew Mertha, *Brothers in Arms: Chinese Aid to the Khmer Rouge, 1975–1979* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 2, 4; Andrew Mertha, “Surrealpolitik: The Experience of Chinese Experts in Democratic Kampuchea, 1975–1979,” *Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review*, no. 4 (September 2012): 65.

59. Mertha, “Surrealpolitik,” 66.

60. The International Bookstore (founded December 1949) was an outlet for “cultural exchanges between new China and other countries.” As part of the Foreign Affairs Committee, it imported and exported books and journals to “strengthen international propaganda,” and by 1962 its “distribution . . . coordinate[d] international revolutionary movements.” Cao Jianfei, ed., *Zhongguo guojitushu maoyi zonggongsi*

sishizhounian: Shilunji [The fortieth anniversary of the China International Publishing Company: Selected papers on its history] (Beijing: China International Publishing Group, 1989), 37, 59, as quoted in Xu Lanjun, “Translation and Internationalism,” in Cook, *Mao’s Little Red Book*, 83.

61. Vita Chieu, *Wo yu Zhonggong he Jiangong chise huaren jiemi: Jiangong ruhe Xingwang* [My story with the Communist Parties of China and Kampuchea: A record of the rise and fall of the Communist Party of Kampuchea], trans. Zhu Xueyuan (Hong Kong: Tianyuan shuwu, 2006), 35.

62. Chieu, *Wo yu Zhonggong he Jiangong chise huaren jiemi*, 35.

63. David Chandler, *Voices from S-21: Terror and History in Pol Pot’s Secret Prison* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 112. See also Kosal Path and Angeliki Kanavou, “Converts, Not Ideologues? The Khmer Rouge Practice of Thought Reform in Cambodia, 1975–1978,” *Journal of Political Ideologies* 20, no. 3 (2015): 312, 326; and Angeliki Kanavou and Kosal Path, “The Lingering Effects of Thought Reform: The Khmer Rouge S-21 Prison Personnel,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 76, no. 1 (February 2017): 89, 95–98.

64. Nim, “Les services publics économiques au Cambodge.”

65. Yvon, “La paysannerie du Cambodge”; Khieu Samphan, “L’économie du Cambodge et ses problèmes d’industrialisation” [Cambodia’s economy and its problems with industrialization] (PhD diss., Université de Paris, 1959).

66. Cheng Yinghong, *Maozhuyi geming: Ershi shijide Zhongguo yu shijie* [Maoist revolution: China and the world in the twentieth century] (Hong Kong: Tianyuanshuwu, 2008).

67. Zhang Yuling, “Xin Zhongguo ‘shiqinian’ zhongzhi yuantuan wudao tuandui zhengzhi gongnengfenxi” [Analysis of the political functions of the centrally administered dance ensembles during New China’s “seventeen years”], *Changjiang daxue xuebao shehui xuekan* [Journal of Yangtze University Social Sciences Office] 35, no. 2 (2012): 115–117, cited in Emily Wilcox, “The Postcolonial Blind Spot: Chinese Dance in the Era of Third Worldism, 1949–1965,” *Positions: Asia Critique* 26, no. 4 (November 2018): 815. On this shift, see John W. Garver, *China’s Quest: The History of the Foreign Relations of the People’s Republic of China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 196–231.

68. See Heder, *Cambodian Communism and the Vietnamese Model*. The Indochinese Communist Party had guided the formation of the Khmer People’s Revolutionary Party, and until Pol Pot’s “revising” of party history, Vietnamese contributions to Cambodian Communism were significant. David Chandler, “Revising the Past in Democratic Kampuchea: When Was the Birthday of the Party?,” *Pacific Affairs* 56, no. 2 (1983): 288–300. On Maoism in the Vietnamese Communists’ praxis, see William J. Duiker, “Seeds of the Dragon: The Influence of the Maoist Model in Vietnam,” in *Critical Perspectives on Mao Zedong’s Thought*, ed. Arif Dirlik, Paul Healy, and Nick Knight (Atlantic Heights, NJ: Humanities Press, 1997), 313–341.

69. On Paris’s vibrant intellectual life before the Second World War, see Michael Goebel, *Anti-imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

70. Ben Kiernan argues in an earlier work that the French Communist Party’s Stalinist orientation influenced the CPK. Ben Kiernan, “Kampuchea and Stalinism,” in *Marxism in Asia*, ed. Colin Mackerras and Nick Knight (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 235.

71. Marie-Alexandrine Martin, *Cambodia: A Shattered Society*, trans. Mark W. McLeod (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 99.

72. Yuon, “La paysannerie du Cambodge”; Nim, “Les services publics économiques au Cambodge.”

1. Discovering Truth through Practice

1. Tang Xiaobing, *Global Space and the Nationalist Discourse of Modernity: The Historical Thinking of Liang Qichao* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), 22; and Rebecca Karl, *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002).

2. Dirlik, *Marxism in the Chinese Revolution*, 75.

3. Xiao Yanzhong, *Jurende dangsheng* [Birth of a colossus] (Beijing: Guoji wenhua chuban gongsi, 1988), 24–27; and Brantley Womack, “From Urban Radical to Rural Revolutionary: Mao from the 1920s to 1937,” in Cheek, *A Critical Introduction to Mao*, 63–67. Mao’s first political essay: Mao Zedong, “Tiyuzhi yanjiu” [A study of physical education], in *Mao Zedongji* [Collected Writings of Mao Zedong], ed. Takeuchi Minoru (Tokyo: Hokubosha, 1970–1972), 1:35–48 (hereafter MZJ). On Mao’s early influences, see Brantley Womack, *The Foundations of Mao Zedong’s Political Thought, 1917–1935* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1982), 1–31, 81; Robert A. Scalapino, “The Evolution of a Young Revolutionary—Mao Zedong in 1919–1921,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 42, no. 1 (November 1982): 29–61; Frederic E. Wakeman Jr., *History and Will: Philosophical Perspectives on Mao Tse-tung’s Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 202–214; and Wei Changlong, “Lun Yang Changjiide minzu lunli guanji dui qingnian Mao Zedongde yingxiang” [On Yang Changji’s thoughts of national ethics and its enlightening influence on young Mao Zedong], *Qianyan* [Forward Position (China)], Hengyang: Hengyang shifan daxue 6 (2010): 184–187.

4. Arif Dirlik, *The Origins of the Chinese Communist Party* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 150, 210. Influences from Chen and Li inclined Mao toward peaceful revolution, but he realized that passivity was ineffectual. Upon his return to Changsha, he lauded Chen as “our teacher” and “pioneer of the thought revolution.” See also Peter Zarrow, *Anarchism and Chinese Political Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 1, 6–7, 11–13, 257–258.

5. Mao Zedong, “Letter to Xiao Xudong, Cai Linbin, and the Other Members in France,” 1 December 1920, in *Mao’s Road to Power: Revolutionary Writings, 1912–1949*, ed. Stuart Schram (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1994), 2:8 (hereafter MRP). See also *Xinmin xuehui ziliao* [Materials of the New People’s Study Society], 144–152, reproduced in *Mao Zedongji bujuan* [Supplements to the collected writings of Mao Zedong], ed. Takeuchi Minoru (Tokyo: Sōsōsha, 1983), 1:289–296.

6. Mao Zedong, “Minzhongde dalianhe” [The great union of the popular masses], in MZJ 1:58.

7. Cities were focal points of youth dissidence and political upheaval in early Republican China. Political movements did not arise as a reply to Euro-American imperialism but were a half century in progress, with imperialism the accelerating, not initiating, agent. Mary B. Rankin, *Elite Activism and Political Transformation in*

China: Zhejiang Province, 1865–1911 (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1986), 1–2, 5, 27; and Yusheng Lin, *The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness: Radical Antitraditionalism in the May Fourth Era* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979). On the radical foment in Hangzhou, see Wen-hsin Yeh, *Provincial Passages: Culture, Space, and the Origins of Chinese Communism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 146.

8. Ishikawa Yoshihiro, *The Formation of the Chinese Communist Party*, trans. Joshua A. Fogel (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 16–33, 41, 190–192, 210–211. Cai's letter: Cai Hesen, "Lettre de Cai Hesen à Mao Zedong, 13 août 1920" [Letter by Cai Hesen to Mao Zedong, 13 August 1920], *Extrême-Orient, Extrême-Occident* [Far East and West (France)] 2, no. 2 (1983): 143–149. See also Yang Kuisong, "Li Dazhao yu Heshang Zhao, jiantan Li Dazhao zaoqide Makesizhuyiguan" [Li Dazhao and Kawakami Hajime: Li Dazhao's early Marxist views], *Dangshi yanjiu* [Party History Research (China)] 2 (1985).

9. Dirlik, *Origins*, 113–114.

10. Hans van de Ven, *From Friend to Comrade: The Founding of the Chinese Communist Party, 1920–1927* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 35.

11. Arif Dirlik, *Revolution and History: The Origins of Marxist Historiography in China, 1919–1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 1.

12. On Chen Duxiu's intense study of Marxism-Leninism and discussions with Voitinsky, see Yang Kuisong, "Chen Duxiu yu gongchanguoji—Jiantan Chen Duxiude 'youqing' wenti" [Chen Duxiu and the Comintern—on the question of Chen Duxiu's "rightist orientation"], *Jindaishi yanjiu* [Modern Chinese History Studies (China)] 2 (1999): 69–135.

13. Dirlik, *Marxism in the Chinese Revolution*, 76.

14. Rebecca Karl, *Mao Zedong and China in the Twentieth Century World* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 18. See also Ishikawa, *Formation of the Chinese Communist Party*, 95–105, 190–192; Dirlik, *Origins*, 96, 120, 146–150, 209–212.

15. Wakeman, *History and Will*, xi.

16. Womack, *Foundations of Mao Zedong's Political Thought*, 81.

17. Dirlik, *Origins*, 244.

18. Mao Zedong, "On Practice," in *Mao Zedong on Dialectical Materialism: Writings on Philosophy*, ed. Nick Knight (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1990), 142. Mao repeated this point to the Yan'an Cadre School in 1941. Mao Zedong, "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu Yan'an ganbuxuexiaode jue ding" [Resolution of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on the Yan'an Cadre School], in *MZJ*, 8:43.

19. Womack, *Foundations of Mao Zedong's Political Thought*, 32–82.

20. Scholars generally date Mao's accession to his winning the deciding vote in the CCP three-man secretariat (March 1943). Mao had the content of his thought sorted out and, at the CCP Sixth Plenum, issued a challenge. But he had not persuaded enough of his colleagues to guarantee his acceptance within the party until 1942–1943. He had to publish "On New Democracy" in a little-known new journal, *Chinese Culture* [*Zhongguo wenhua*], in its obscure first issue in January 1940.

21. Mao Zedong, "Oppose Bookism," May 1930, in *MRP*, 3:419. On Mao's CCP career during the First United Front, see Li Kan, *Guomindangyuan Mao Zedong* [Guomindang member Mao Zedong] (Taipei: Li Ao chubanshe, 2014).

22. Alexander Vatlin and Stephen Smith, “The Comintern,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Communism*, ed. Stephen Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 188, 196; and Womack, *Foundations of Mao Zedong’s Political Thought*, 83–142.

23. “Analysis” came out in 1926 in *Chinese Peasant* [Zhongguo nongmin], a journal published by the GMD Central Committee Peasant Department that was an important venue for articles on mid-1920s peasant movements in China.

24. Mao Zedong, “Zhongguo shehui geiejide fenxi” [Analysis of the various classes in Chinese Society], in *MZJ*, 1:161–174.

25. Womack, *Foundations of Mao Zedong’s Political Thought*, 52–53.

26. Philip Huang, “Mao Tse-tung and the Middle Peasants, 1925–1928,” *Modern China* 1, no. 3 *The Rural Revolution. Part II* (July 1975): 271–296. Mao also taught 36 of the 252 credit hours at the PMTI, including the most important courses: China’s Peasant Problem (twenty-three credit hours). He also taught Peasant Education and Geography. Roy Hofheinz Jr., *The Broken Wave: The Chinese Communist Peasant Movement, 1922–1928* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977). On Peng Pai, see Fernando Galbiati, *P’eng P’ai and the Hai-Lu-Feng Soviet* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1985).

27. Mao Zedong, “Report on the Peasant Movement in Hunan,” February 1927, in *MRP*, 2:430.

28. Mao Zedong, “Report on the Peasant Movement in Hunan,” February 1927, in *MRP*, 2:430–435.

29. There were Soviet regions (*suqu*) throughout many areas of southern China. Most contemporary histories list over a dozen such regions. The Southern Jiangxi (Gannan) and Western Fujian (Minxi) Soviet Regions came to form the Jiangxi Central Soviet. The “central” part of the name originates in the CCP’s internal party documents: Central Revolutionary Base Area (Zhongyang geming genjudi). It was “central” because after December 1931, the CCP Central Committee (previously based in Shanghai’s International Settlement) moved to the Chinese Soviet Republic, which made the Soviet the most politically important.

30. Ying Xing, “Cong ‘difang junshihua’ dao ‘junshi difanghua’: Yi Hongsijun ‘banzhe fazhan’ zhanlüede yuanyuan liubian wei zhongxin” [From “local militarization” to “military localization”: A focus on the origins and development of the Fourth Red Army’s “integrated development” strategy], *Kaifang shidai* [Open Times (China)] 5 (2018): 1–42. Mao used the Jiangxi Soviet government to purge the recently established (1930) Jiangxi Action Committee and accused the AB Clique of forming a “nationalist secret organization,” which led to an unsuccessful Red Army revolt against him that ceased at Futian in December 1930. Tony Saich, ed., *The Rise to Power of the Chinese Communist Party: Documents and Analysis* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1996), 509–510. Although Mao had no evidence of “liquidationist tendencies” and “anti-Bolshevism” among the accused, the “Futian Incident” (so described as “counter-revolutionary”) highlighted strong tensions among the old guard, the Red Army, and new local forces. Gao Hua, *How the Red Sun Rose: The Origin and Development of the Yan’an Rectification Movement, 1930–1945*, trans. Stacey Mosher and Guo Jian (Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2019), 1–16. See also Stephen C. Averill, “The Origins of the Futian Incident,” in *New Perspectives on the Chinese Communist Revolution*, ed. Tony Saich and Hans van de Ven (New York: Routledge, 1995), 76–81.

31. “Land Law of the Soviet Republic,” November 1931, in Saich, *Rise to Power of the Chinese Communist Party*, 556–558; and “Outline of the Constitution of the Chinese Soviet Republic,” 7 November 1931, in Saich, *Rise to Power of the Chinese Communist Party*, 552–556.

32. Marc Oppen, “Revolution Defeated: The Collapse of the Chinese Soviet Republic,” *Twentieth-Century China* 43, no. 1 (January 2018): 49–50.

33. Wang Ming’s 28 Bolsheviks wished to apply doctrinaire Marxism to China, whereas Mao had advocated for a pragmatic approach. On the Mao-Wang rivalry, see Wylie, *Emergence of Maoism*, 76–99. On CCP exchanges with the Comintern, see Yang Yunruo and Yang Kuisong, *Gongchan guoji he Zhongguo geming* [The Communist International and the Chinese Communist Party] (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1988); and Zhou Wenqi and Chu Liangru, eds., *Gongchan guoji, Sulian he Zhongguo gongchandang guanxi biannianshi, 1919–1991* [Chronicle of the relationship between the Comintern, Soviet Union, and the Chinese Communist Party] (Wuhan: Hubei renmin chubanshe/xian guonei faxing, 1993).

34. Before the CCP evacuation of the Jiangxi Soviet, Mao was “completely excluded from the decision-making core.” Moscow neither vied for him nor supported the CCP over the easily influenced GMD. Mao was “envious of how Wang Ming monopolized communications with Stalin.” Gao, *How the Red Sun Rose*, 87, 147. Soviet backing of Mao’s rivals led him to characterize his waning authority as not “extend[ing] beyond my cave.” Lee Feigon, *Mao: A Reinterpretation* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2002), 70.

35. Mao emerged as a major party leader because his strategy to defeat the GMD was to “lure the enemy in deep” (*youdi shenru*) rather than to “engage the enemy outside the gates” (*yudi yu menwai*). Marc Oppen, “Fighting the People, Fighting for the People: Insurgent Governance and Conflict Outcomes in China, Malaya, and Vietnam” (PhD diss., University of Virginia, Charlottesville, 2016), 63–65.

36. Jing Huang, *Factionalism in Chinese Communist Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 107; Benjamin Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1951), 68–78, 100–166; Hans van de Ven, *China at War: Triumph and Tragedy in the Emergence of the New China, 1937–1952* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 144; Yang Kuisong, *Geming* [Revolution] (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 2012), 3:448; and Frederick Teiwes and Warren Sun, “From a Leninist to a Charismatic Party,” in Saich and van de Ven, *New Perspectives on the Chinese Communist Revolution*, 339–387.

37. Womack, “From Urban Radical to Rural Revolutionary,” 77. I use the word “thinking” here because Mao’s was not a systematic “thought” before 1938, and more likely it was 1942 when he rounded out his theory-practice-theory formulation.

38. Dirlik, *Marxism in the Chinese Revolution*, 75.

39. Hans van de Ven, “War, Cosmopolitanism, and Authority,” in Cheek, *Critical Introduction to Mao*, 96–97.

40. Mao Zedong, “On Practice,” in Knight, *Mao Zedong on Dialectical Materialism*, 134–140. Mao drew the “tiger’s lair” saying from the *Hou Hanshu* (Book of the Later Han dynasty, 25 AD–220 AD).

41. Frederick Teiwes, “Mao and His Followers,” in Cheek, *Critical Introduction to Mao*, 132.

42. Dirlik, *Marxism in the Chinese Revolution*, 77.

43. Mao Zedong, “The Law of the Unity of Contradictions [On Contradiction],” in Knight, *Mao Zedong on Dialectical Materialism*, 154.

44. Mao Zedong, “On Protracted War,” 26 May–3 June 1938, in *MRP*, 6:358–359. Mao’s writings of this period were influenced by northern CCP commanders’ direct experiences. They met regularly, briefed Mao, and shared their experiences in the Anti-Japanese Resistance War.

45. Mao Zedong, “On New Democracy,” 15 January 1940, in *MRP*, 7:331, 333, 340–341, 368–369. On Mao’s break from viewing society through the base-superstructure lens and his effort to distinguish politics from the “concentrated expression of economics” (*jizhongde biao xian*) of culture in society, see Knight, *Rethinking Mao*, 166–168.

46. Mao Zedong, “On New Democracy,” 15 January 1940, in *MRP* 7:332–344.

47. Dirlik, *Marxism in the Chinese Revolution*, 81. On the New Stage, see Mao Zedong, “Lun xinjieduan” [On the New Stage], 12–14 October 1938, in *MZJ*, 6:163–263.

48. Timothy Cheek, “Mao, Revolution, and Memory,” in Cheek, *Critical Introduction to Mao*, 10. Mao drew from V. I. Lenin’s *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (Moscow: Zhizn’ i znanie, 1917).

49. Dirlik, *Marxism in the Chinese Revolution*, 79. See also Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 190–192; and Knight, “Form of Mao Zedong’s ‘Sinification of Marxism,’” 17–33.

50. Wylie, *Emergence of Maoism*, 46–48, 89–90; and Dirlik, *Marxism in the Chinese Revolution*, 79, 84–85. Debate over Sinification’s nature and purpose reveals its undervalued importance. Some foreground Mao’s nationalism, militarism, and doctrinaire Leninism as factors in his deviation from Marxist orthodoxy. Stuart Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Zedong* (New York: Praeger, 1969), 112–116. Frederic Wakeman attempts a genealogical approach to identify parallels between Mao’s thought and “the unity of knowledge and practice” in the Wang Yangming school of Confucianism in which Mao was interested as a young radical. Wakeman, *History and Will*, 238–258. Benjamin Schwartz observes continuity with Confucian tradition in Mao’s preoccupation with morality in politics. Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao*, 1–17. Thomas Metzger suggests that Sinification “came to express and implement the traditional ethos of interdependence.” Thomas Metzger, *Escape from Predicament: Neo-Confucianism and China’s Evolving Political Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), 233. Others regard Sinified Marxism purely as a ploy against the rival 28 Bolsheviks. Robert C. North, *Moscow and Chinese Communists* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1963), 193. I follow Knight in taking Mao’s Marxism seriously. Knight, *Rethinking Mao*, 10, 197–216. Mao broke with Stalin (to the degree possible when the CCP had no alternative but to rely on Moscow in the Cold War), and his Marxism moved away from Stalin’s. Mao’s behavior and the system he nonetheless led, though, were deeply Stalinist in organizational terms: central economic planning, no markets, strong secret police presence, and the moral-ideologization of policy. Mao’s break with Stalin thus did not exclude importing much of the Stalinist system, which grafted onto the sterner sinews of late imperial Chinese statecraft quite well.

51. Wylie, *Emergence of Maoism*, 7.

52. Mao addresses these obstacles in Mao Zedong, “Xinminzhuzhuyide xianzheng” [New Democratic Constitution], in *MZJ*, 2:237–248.

53. Arif Dirlik, “Modernism and Antimodernism in Mao Zedong’s Marxism,” in Dirlik, Healy, and Knight, *Critical Perspectives on Mao Zedong’s Thought*, 70.

54. Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao’s China*, 9.

55. David Apter and Tony Saich, *Revolutionary Discourse in Mao’s Republic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 89.

56. Nick Knight, *Marxist Philosophy in China: From Qu Qiubai to Mao Zedong, 1923–1945* (Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Springer, 2005), 103, quoting Ai Siqu, *Sixiangfangfalun* [Methodology of thought], 4th ed. (Shanghai: Shenghuo shudian, 1939), 160.

57. Dirlik, *Marxism in the Chinese Revolution*, 78, 96. Mao’s famous rebuke: “Zhengdun xuefeng dangfeng wenfeng” [Correct the incorrect trends of our study, party, and literature], in *MZJ*, 8:70–75.

58. Wylie, *Emergence of Maoism*, 36. See also Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 222–235.

59. Mao Zedong, “On New Democracy,” 15 January 1940, in *MRP*, 7:367–368; and Knight, “Form of Mao Zedong’s ‘Sinification of Marxism,’” 24–28, 30. Mao used the Chinese saying “*xiangfan xiangcheng*” (things that oppose each other also complement each other).

60. Mao Zedong, “Rectify the Party’s Style of Work,” Beijing, 1 February 1942, in *MRP*, 8:26.

61. Saich, *Rise to Power of the Chinese Communist Party*, lxi.

62. John W. Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations, 1937–1945: The Diplomacy of Chinese Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 245; and Tony Saich, “Writing or Rewriting History? The Construction of the Maoist Resolution on Party History,” in Saich and van de Ven, *New Perspectives on the Chinese Communist Revolution*, 315.

63. Saich, *Rise to Power of the Chinese Communist Party*, 972; and Gao, *How the Red Sun Rose*, 215.

64. Saich, “Writing or Rewriting History?,” 299; and Gao, *How the Red Sun Rose*, 309–318.

65. Kang Sheng “added fuel to the fire” of this dark atmosphere in 1943. Gao, *How the Red Sun Rose*, 497. On Kang’s description of the “strategic aspect of this struggle,” see Kang Sheng, “Abstract of Kang Sheng’s Report to a Training Class,” August 1943, translated in Dai Qing, *Wang Shiwei and “Wild Lilies”: Rectification and Purges in the Chinese Communist Party, 1942–1944* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1994), 150. Leftist critics’ purging was, in the Party Center’s view, “necessary to the rectification.” Timothy Cheek, “The Fading of Wild Lilies: Wang Shiwei and Mao Zedong’s Yan’an Talks in the First CPC Rectification Movement,” *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, no. 11 (January 1984): 26.

66. Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao’s China*, 13.

67. Apter and Saich, *Revolutionary Discourse in Mao’s Republic*, 2, 4.

68. Apter and Saich, *Revolutionary Discourse in Mao’s Republic*, xvi, 264–265, 288. On how Rectification inspired cadres to conduct their lives according to CCP standards, see Huang Daoxuan, “Zhengfeng yundongde xinlingshi” [The spiritual history of the Rectification Movement], *Jindaishi yanjiu* [Modern Chinese History Studies (China)], no. 2 (2020): 4–26.

69. Apter and Saich, *Revolutionary Discourse in Mao’s Republic*, 268–269. On symbolic capital, see Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of the Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge

University Press, 1977); and Pierre Bourdieu, *In Other Words: Essays towards a Reflective Sociology* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 123–139.

70. “Man of prowess” is in reference to Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region in South-east Asian Perspectives*, 29, 65.

71. Mao Zedong, “On Coalition Government,” 24 April 1945, in *MRP*, 8:760.

72. See Joseph Yick, *Making Urban Revolution in China: The CCP-GMD Struggle for Beijing-Tianjin, 1945–49* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1995).

73. Knight, *Rethinking Mao*, 219.

74. Frederick Teiwes, *Leadership, Legitimacy, and Conflict in China: From a Charismatic Mao to the Politics of Succession* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1984), 5–6.

75. Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao’s China*, 10–13.

76. Jowitt, *New World Disorder*, 2, 18–19. Jowitt provides a useful vocabulary for understanding principal phases on page 16.

77. Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao’s China*, 10–11, 215–278.

78. Jowitt, *New World Disorder*, 30.

79. Geremie R. Barmé, “For Truly Great Men, Look to This Age Alone,” in Cheek, *A Critical Introduction to Mao*, 257.

80. Marc Oppen, *People’s Wars in China, Malaya, and Vietnam* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2019), 135–172. See also Huang Daoxuan, “Xilian: 1946 nian zhi 1948 nian nongcun tugai zhongde ganbu zhenggai” [Wash your face: Cadre rectification during the Land Reform], *Lishi yanjiu* [Historical Research (China)], no. 4 (2007): 89–111; Klaus Mühlhahn, *Making China Modern: From the Great Qing to Xi Jinping* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019), 402; and Harold Tanner, *Where Chiang Kai-Shek Lost China: The Liao-Shen Campaign, 1948* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015), 135. As part of the Second United Front, the CCP stressed the utility of Sun Yat-sen’s principle of “land ownership by tillers” as he outlined in the “people’s livelihood” (*minsheng*) portion of his Three Principles of the People (*sanminzhuyi*). Sun Yat-sen, “The Three Principles of the People,” 1924, in *The Columbia Guide to Modern Chinese History*, ed. R. Keith Schoppa (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 284.

81. Mühlhahn, *Making China Modern*, 402–403; and Steven I. Levine, *Anvil of Victory: The Communist Revolution in Manchuria* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 211–212.

82. Tanner, *Where Chiang Kai-Shek Lost China*, 135, citing Daze Wuyan, “Jiefang zhanzheng shiqi Zhongguo Gongchandang dui Dongbeise guanli yu dui Su maoyi” [The Chinese Communist Party’s administration of the Northeast and trade with the Soviet Union during the Liberation War period], *Zhonggong dangshi ziliao* [CCP Historical Material] 1 (March 2017): 188–189; Sarah Paine, *The Wars for Asia, 1911–1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 254; Zhang Tong, “Jiefang zhanzheng zhongde Haerbin” [Harbin during the Liberation War], *Wenshi Jinghua* [Selected Historical Accounts] 8 (2008): 15; and Levine, *Anvil of Victory*, 212, 222.

83. Oppen, *People’s Wars in China, Malaya, and Vietnam*, 141, citing “Zhonggong Jin-Cha-Ji zhongyangju guanyu tudi huiyide zongjie baogao” [CCP Shanxi-Chahar-Hebei Central Committee Summary Report on the Land Conference] (1947), in *Jin-Cha-Ji jiefangqu lishi wenxian xuanbian, 1945–1949* [Selected historical materials on the Shanxi-Chahar-Hebei Liberated Area], ed. Zhongyang dang’an guan, Hebei sheng shehui kexueyuan, and Zhonggong Hebei shengwei dangshi yanjiushi [Party History Research

Division of the CCP Hebei Provincial Committee] (Beijing: Zhongguo dang'an chubanshe, 1998), 336. See also Huang, "Xilian," 90–91.

84. Mühlhahn, *Making China Modern*, 403.

85. Tanner, *Where Chiang Kai-Shek Lost China*, 135, 138. See also Yang Qing, "Jiefang zhanzheng shiqi dangde chengshi siying gongshangye zhengcede zhiding he shisi" [The making and application of the party's policies on private industrial and commercial enterprise during the civil war], *Dangde Wenxian* [Literature of the Communist Party] 1 (2005): 48.

86. Mühlhahn, *Making China Modern*, 404–405. On the economic side of this phase, see Yunhui Lin, *Xiang Shehui Zhuyi guodu: Zhongguo Jingji yu Shehuide Zhuanxing, 1953–1955* [Transition to socialism: The transformation of Chinese economy and society, 1953–1955] (Hong Kong: Xianggang Zhongwen Daxue Dangdai Zhongguo Wenhua Yanjiu Zhongxin, 2009), 32–44.

87. Mühlhahn, *Making China Modern*, 403–404; and Julia Strauss, "Paternalist Terror: The Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries and Regime Consolidation in the People's Republic of China, 1950–1953," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 44, no. 1 (January 2002): 97. Land reform in "newly-liberated areas" (*xinqu*) south of the Yangzi after 1949 was moderate (Deng Xiaoping was one of the people who ensured that to be the case.)

88. Huang, "Xilian," 110. On "cultural nexus of power," see Prasenjit Duara, *Culture, Power, and the State: Rural North China, 1900–1942* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988).

89. Mühlhahn, *Making China Modern*, 406.

90. Mühlhahn, *Making China Modern*, 405–407. The radical Land Reform movement that characterized the civil war period was not what parties elsewhere emulated or knew about, as the CCP did not publish foreign-language material on it.

91. Quoted in Yang Kuisong, "Reconsidering the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries," *China Quarterly*, no. 193 (March 2008): 104.

92. Quoted in Yang, "Reconsidering the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries," 105.

93. Yang, "Reconsidering the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries," 102, 105–106.

94. Quoted in Yang, "Reconsidering the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries," 107.

95. Quoted in Yang, "Reconsidering the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries," 108.

96. Yang, "Reconsidering the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries," 121.

97. Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, vol. 1, *Contradictions among the People, 1956–1957* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), 19–25. Life expectancy "rose from 36 years in 1950 to 57 years by 1957." Lee, *Mao*, 107. Mao referred to 1955 as "the year of decision in the struggle between socialism and capitalism," in which "a raging tidal wave has swept away all the demons and ghosts." Mao Zedong, *Socialist Upsurge in the Countryside* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1957), 159–160. Official party historiography evaluates the 1949–1956 era as "golden years characterized by the successful construction of socialism." Felix Wemheuer, "'The Grain Problem Is an Ideological Problem': Discourses of Hunger in the 1957 Socialist Education Campaign," in *Eating Bitterness: New Perspectives on China's Great Leap For-*

ward and Famine, ed. Kimberley Ens Manning and Felix Wemheuer (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 108–109.

98. MacFarquhar, *Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, 1:169–176.

99. Mao Zedong, “Zengqian dangde tuanji, jicheng dangde chuantong” [Strengthen party unity and carry forward party traditions], 30 August 1956, in *Mao Zedong Wenji* [Collected works of Mao Zedong], ed. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiu shibian (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1999), 88–89.

100. Frederick Teiwes and Warren Sun, “The Politics of an ‘Un-Maoist’ Interlude: The Case of Opposing Rash Advance, 1956–1957,” in *New Perspectives on State Socialism in China*, ed. Timothy Cheek and Tony Saich (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1997), 151; and Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao’s China*, 219–220.

101. MacFarquhar, *Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, 1:51–52 (on Liu Shaoqi’s directive on drama and the party organization of the Ministry of Culture); and James Chieh Hsiung, *Ideology and Practice: The Evolution of Chinese Communism* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), 183–184. “Hundred Flowers” originates from the saying “Let a hundred flowers bloom; let a hundred schools of thought contend” (*baihua qifang, baijia zhengming*). Mao drew from China’s period when Confucianism and Taoism “sprouted during a time of contention and debate” and from Yan’an Rectification. Lee, *Mao*, 112.

102. On Liu Shaoqi’s description of the slogan’s origins, see MacFarquhar, *Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, 1:53.

103. Mao Zedong, “On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People,” 21 February 1957, in *Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao: From the Hundred Flowers to the Great Leap Forward*, ed. Roderick MacFarquhar, Timothy Cheek, and Eugene Wu (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 131–190.

104. Wu Yiching, *The Cultural Revolution at the Margins: Chinese Socialism in Crisis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 31–32.

105. Mao Zedong, “On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People,” in MacFarquhar, Cheek, and Wu, *Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao*, 164–165.

106. Hsiung, *Ideology and Practice*, 150.

107. Mao Zedong, “Summary of a Talk with the Representatives of Press and Publishing Circles,” 10 March 1957, in MacFarquhar, Cheek, and Wu, *Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao*, 257–258. See also MacFarquhar, *Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, 1:280. One explanation for Mao’s shift to punishing critics of CCP policies was that his contemporaries did not share his enthusiasm for inviting criticism from subordinates.

108. Mao Zedong, “Shiqing zhengzai qi bianhua” [Things are beginning to change], in *Mao Zedong xuanji* [Selected works of Mao Zedong] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe chubanshan, 1977), 5:425–427 (hereafter MZ XJ). See also Mao Zedong, “On the Ten Great Relationships,” 25 April 1956, in *Chairman Mao Talks to the People: Talks and Letters, 1956–1971*, ed. Stuart Schram (New York: Pantheon, 1974), 78–80. On the multiple origins of the Ten Major Relationships (*Shi daguanxi*), see Stuart Schram, “Mao Tse-tung and the Theory of Permanent Revolution, 1958–1969,” *China Quarterly* 46 (1971): 221–244.

109. Mao Zedong, “Shiqing zhengzai qi bianhua,” 5:426–427.

110. Mao Zedong, “Interjections at a Meeting during the Qingdao Conference,” 17 July 1957, in *The Writings of Mao Zedong, 1949–1976*, ed. Michael Kau and John Leung (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1989), 2:638. On the 1957 strike wave: Elizabeth Perry, “Shanghai’s Strike Wave of 1957,” in Cheek and Saich, *New Perspectives on State Socialism in China*, 234–261.

111. Knight, *Rethinking Mao*, 225. Mao declared that “hundred schools of thought” were only the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Lu Dingyi, “Baihua qifang, baijia zhengming” [Let a hundred flowers bloom; let a hundred schools of thought contend], *Renmin Ribao* [People’s Daily; hereafter *RMRB*] 13 June 1956, 3.

112. Mao Zedong, “Summary Address for the Conference of Provincial, Municipal, and Autonomous Region Party Secretaries,” 27 January 1957, in Kau and Leung, *Writings of Mao Zedong*, 2:281. See also Mao Zedong, “Talk When Receiving Members of the Second Committee of the National Student Federation,” March 1957, in MacFarquhar, Cheek, and Wu, *Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao*, 203–204.

113. Bo Yibo, *Ruogan zhongdajuece yu shijiande huigu* [A review of certain major policies and events] (Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1993), 2:1000–1001.

114. Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao’s China*, 170.

115. Edgar Faure, *The Serpent and the Tortoise* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1958), 63.

116. *Dan’ Paṭivatt* [Revolutionary Flag] Special issue (September–October 1976). No. D21418. Also quoted in Kem Sos and Timothy Carney, trans., “Sharpen the Consciousness of the Proletarian Class to Be As Keen and Strong As Possible,” *Revolutionary Flag*, Special Issue, September–October 1976, in Jackson, *Cambodia 1975–1978*, 270.

117. MacFarquhar, *Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, 1:57–76.

118. Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao’s China*, 218. The CCP’s experience with agricultural cooperativization had given Mao the impression that the peasants’ “positive response” to agricultural cooperativization differentiated it from the Soviet coercive effort. The party’s successes, he believed, could underpin a rash advance and afford him the necessary political capital to launch his alternative program. Mao Zedong, preface to *Socialist Upsurge in China’s Countryside*, 7–10; and Knight, *Rethinking Mao*, 219–220. Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping lauded Mao’s vision and left the methods by which to achieve this level of development to his discretion. The 1958 meetings, particularly Nanning, demonstrate Mao’s “awesome power”: Zhou Enlai and Chen Yun, both opponents of rash advance, came under intense scrutiny and were forced to self-criticize; the meetings levied criticisms at economic coordinating bodies’ “bureaucratic practices”; and provincial leaders took on a “crucial role.” Frederick Teiwes and Warren Sun, *China’s Road to Disaster: Mao, Central Politicians and Provincial Leaders in the Unfolding of the Great Leap Forward, 1955–1959* (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe: 1999), 73.

119. See Li Yunhui, *Dayuejin: Chao-Ying gan-Mei yu gongchanzhuyi wutuobang* [The Great Leap Forward: Surpassing Great Britain, catching up to the United States, and the Communist utopia] (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, 2006).

120. Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 71.

121. Knight, *Rethinking Mao*, 227; and Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, vol. 2, *The Great Leap Forward, 1958–1960* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 51–76.

122. Quoted in Yu Liu, “Maoist Discourse and the Mobilization of Emotions in Revolutionary China,” *Modern China* 36, no. 3 (May 2010): 355. For a variation of this quote (“A few years’ hard work, ten thousand years of happiness”), see Stuart Schram, “To Utopia and Back: A Cycle in the History of the Chinese Communist Party,” *The China Quarterly*, no. 87 (September 1981): 420.

123. Mao Zedong, "Speech at the Conference of Heads of Delegations to the Second Session of the Eighth Party Congress," 18 May 1958, *Marxists Internet Archive* https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-8/mswv8_11.htm. On Mao's interest in economic matters, see Teiwes and Sun, *China's Road to Disaster*, 177.

124. Dali Yang, *Calamity and Reform in China: State, Rural Society, and Industrial Change since the Great Leap Famine* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), 43–44.

125. Zhou Feizhou, "Jinbiaosai tizhi" [The tournament system], *Shehuixue yanjiu* [Social Sciences Research (China)], no. 3 (2009): 1–23.

126. Dali Yang, "Surviving the Great Leap Famine," in Cheek and Saich, *New Perspectives on State Socialism in China*, 262.

127. Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao's China*, 218.

128. MacFarquhar, *Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, 2:333.

129. Jowitt, *New World Disorder*, 16; and Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao's China*, 11, 155–157.

130. Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao's China*, 218.

131. Hsiung, *Ideology and Practice*, 191–199. Mao "retired" from his post as PRC state chairman in 1959, but he remained CCP chairman. Liu Shaoqi became the new CCP president in April 1959.

132. Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao's China*, 218–219. The divisive nature of party politics is evident in the varied responses among party members to volume 4 of Mao's *Selected Works* (published in autumn 1960). It contains some of Mao's essays from the Third Revolutionary Civil War (*Disanci guonei geming zhanzheng*), reifies the importance of upholding party discipline, and criticizes the wrong ultra-Left policy of 1931–1934.

133. Wang, "Chinese Communist Party's Relationship with the Khmer Rouge in the 1970s," 4.

134. Frederick Teiwes, *Politics and Purges in China: Rectification and the Decline of Party Norms, 1950–1965* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1993), xxxix, xli. See also Liu Shaoqi, *Collected Works of Liu Shao-ch'i, 1958–1967* (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1968), 360–361, 375.

135. MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*, 113–119.

136. *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo sishinian dashiji: 1949–1989* [Great forty-year history of the People's Republic of China] (Beijing: Guangming Ribao, 1990), 109–110; Zhonggong Zhongyang dangxiao dangshi jiaoyanshi, ed., *Zhongguo gongchandang lishi dashiji* [Chronology of the Chinese Communist Party] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1989), 231. On countering peasant protests on the rural/urban divide, see Wemheuer, "'Grain Problem Is an Ideological Problem'" 107–129.

137. Richard Baum, "Revolution and Reaction in the Chinese Countryside: The Socialist Education Movement in Cultural Revolutionary Perspective," *China Quarterly*, no. 38 (April–June 1969): 93. On permanent revolution, see Matthew Galway, "Permanent Revolution," in Sorace, Franceschini, and Loubere, *Afterlives of Chinese Communism*, 181–188.

138. MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*, 8–9; Wu, *Cultural Revolution at the Margins*, 20; and Lowell Dittmer, *Liu Shao-ch'i and the Chinese Cultural Revolution: The Politics of Mass Criticism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 57.

Mao intended the SEM to require “five to ten generations” to stamp out “bourgeois tendencies.”

139. Lorenz M. Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split: The Cold War in the Communist World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 210.

140. Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao's China*, 228.

141. Gao Wenqian, *Zhou Enlai: The Last Perfect Revolutionary* (New York: Public Affairs, 2007), 93–95; and Teiwes, *Politics and Purges in China*, xli. Teiwes does not believe that Liu intended to agitate Mao. Lüthi describes Liu's opening report as “ambivalent on Mao's personal responsibility.” Lüthi, *Sino-Soviet Split*, 210. Liu rejected the rehabilitation of Peng Dehuai on the charge that Peng had formed an antiparty “military club.” Jin Chunming, *Jianguohou sanshisannian* [Thirty years after the founding of the country] (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1987), 144. Mao recalled Liu's “rightist deviation” at the 7,000 Cadre Meeting when explicating his loss of confidence at the Cultural Revolution's onset. Teiwes, *Politics and Purges in China*, xli. Peng Zhen was the first major figure to be purged during the Cultural Revolution. Lee, *Mao*, 143.

142. Frederick Teiwes and Warren Sun, *The Tragedy of Lin Biao: Riding the Tiger during the Cultural Revolution* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996), 196. Lin approached Mao Zedong Thought as a fundamentalist in contravention to party doctrine as laid out in 1956. Li Dazhao and Mao emphasized will over other metrics, but Lin subscribed to this view so effusively that his Maoism was “weak” on application and “strong on faith.” Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao's China*, 219–220.

143. Gao, *Zhou Enlai*, 95.

144. *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo sishinian dashiji*, 109–110; and *Zhonggong Zhongyang dangxiao dangshi jiaoyanshi, Zhongguo gongchandang lishi dashiji*, 231. See also “Draft Resolution of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on Some Problems in Cultural Work,” in Richard Baum and Frederick Teiwes, *Ssu-Ch'ing: The Socialist Education Movement of 1962–1966* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 58–59; and Dongping Han, “Impact of the Cultural Revolution on Rural Education and Economic Development,” *Modern China* 27, no. 1 (January 2001): 59–90.

145. Felix Wemheuer, *A Social History of Maoist China: Conflict and Change, 1949–1976* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 39–40; and Wu, *Cultural Revolution at the Margins*, 252–253.

146. Maurice Meisner, *Mao's China and After: A History of the People's Republic of China*, 3rd ed. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986), 275–276. All major party leaders except Zhou Enlai assisted in drafting the Later Ten Points, but sources vary on who was responsible. Cong Jin identifies Peng and Liu as authors in *Quzhe fazhande suiyue* [Years of tortuous development] (Henan: Renmin chubanshe, 1991), 531. Bo Yibo and Richard Baum credit Peng. Bo Yibo, *Ruogan zhongdajuece*, 2:1112; and Richard Baum, *Prelude to Revolution: Mao, the Party, and the Peasant Question, 1962–66* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975), 43. Robert Weatherley credits all three. Robert Weatherley, *Politics in China since 1949: Legitimizing Authoritarian Rule*. (London: Routledge, 2006), 62.

147. Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, vol. 3, *The Coming of the Cataclysm, 1961–1966* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 339–348, 419–427; and *Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei bangongting geming zaofandui*, ed., *Liu Shaoqi zai gedi xiuzhengzhuyi yanlun huibian* [Compilation of Liu Shaoqi's revisionist utterances spread in various localities] (Shanghai: n.p., 1967), 210–211. The First Ten appear as Appendix B in Baum and Teiwes, *Ssu-Ch'ing*, 58.

148. Appendix F, in Baum and Teiwes, *Ssu-Ch'ing*, 120
149. Short, *Pol Pot*, 156.
150. Wu, *Cultural Revolution at the Margins*, 20, quoting Mao Zedong, *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao* [Mao Zedong's manuscripts since the founding of the PRC] (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1996), 12:220.
151. Ezra Vogel, *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 14, 145–153; and Garver, *China's Quest*, 319–320. On the Lin Biao Incident, see Qiu Jin, *The Culture of Power: The Lin Biao Incident in the Cultural Revolution* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999). On the purge of Deng and repudiation of the Gang of Four, see Shi Yun and Li Danhui, *Nanyi jixude "Jixu geming"—Cong pi Lin dao pi Deng* [When the "continuous revolution" goes awry: From the anti-Lin Biao campaign to the anti-Deng Xiaoping campaign (1972–1976)] (Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2008), 519–526, 589–600, 635–640; and Zhong Yenlin, *Wengeqiande Deng Xiaoping: Mao Zedongde "fushuai"* [Deng Xiaoping before the Cultural Revolution: Mao's "Vice Marshal" (1956–1966)] (Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2013).
152. Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao's China*, 266, citing Apter and Saich, *Revolutionary Discourse in Mao's Republic*, xi.

2. Transmitting Maoism

1. MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*, 3–11; Wu, *Cultural Revolution at the Margins*, 17–52; Knight, *Rethinking Mao*, 11–12, 261–262; Anita Chan, *Children of Mao: Personality Development and Political Activism in the Red Guard Generation* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985), 11–18, 124–133; and Stefan R. Landsberger and Warren Van der Heijden, *Chinese Posters: The IISH-Landsberger Collections* (Munich: Prestel, 2009), 138.
2. Li Danhui and Xia Yafeng, *Mao and the Sino-Soviet Split, 1959–1973: A New History* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018), 68–103; John Garver, *Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1993), 117; and Garver, *China's Quest*, 196–231. Former Chinese ambassador to Cambodia Kang Maozhao criticized this era in Chinese diplomacy. Kang Maozhao, *Waijiao huiyilu* [Diplomatic memoirs] eds. Kang Xizhong, Liu Shaohua, and Chen Benhong. (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2000), 175–176.
3. See Cheng, *Maozhuyi geming*.
4. Garver, *Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China*, 118.
5. Richardson, *China, Cambodia, and the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence*, 64; and Hsiung, *Ideology and Practice*, 176. On larger trends in Sino-Cambodian relations at this time, see Kang, *Waijiao huiyilu*, 177–226; Zhang Xizhen, *Xihanuke jiazu* [The Sihanouk family] (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenpian chubanshe, 1996); and Zhonghua renmin gongheguo waijiaobu waijiao shipian, *Zhongguo waijiao gailan* [Overview of Chinese diplomacy] (Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 1987–2002, 1987).
6. Anna Louise Strong, *Letter from China* (Beijing), no. 56 (22 February 1968), 4, as quoted in Hsiung, *Ideology and Practice*, 160.
7. Hsiung, *Ideology and Practice*, 159. On this balance, see Liu Shaoqi, *Guojizhuyi yu minzuzhuyi* [Internationalism and nationalism] (Beijing: Jiefangshe, 1949).
8. Hsiung, *Ideology and Practice*, 162–163.

9. Maoism's strong moral overtones, emphases on practical application, fighting poverty, and ending oppression, and "holy scripture" on which to ground itself in the confines of a universal paradigm mirror similar trends in liberation theology. Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation* (London: SCM Press, 1974).

10. Lin Biao, "Long Live the Victory of People's War!," 3 September 1965, *Marxists Internet Archive* https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/lin-biao/1965/09/peoples_war/.

11. Frederick Engels, "The Part Played by Labor in the Transformation of Ape to Man," 1876, *Marxists Internet Archive* www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1876/part-played-labour/index.htm.

12. Philip Killicoat, "Weaponomics: The Global Market for Assault Rifles," *Post-Conflict Transitions Working Paper*, no. 10 (April 2007): 3.

13. Lin Biao, "Foreword to the Second Chinese Edition of *Quotations from Mao Zedong*," 16 December 1966, quoted in Alexander Cook, "Introduction," in Cook, *Mao's Little Red Book*, 1.

14. A. M. Halperin, "The Foreign Policy Uses of the Chinese Revolutionary Model," *China Quarterly*, no. 7 (July–September 1961): 1–2.

15. V. I. Lenin, "A Caricature of Marxism and 'Imperialist Economism,'" in *Collected Works of VI Lenin*, vol. 23, August 1916–March 1917 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964), 35.

16. Liu Shaoqi, *Guanyu Dongya minzu geming yundong celüe wenti gei Shidalinde baogao* [East Asian strategic issues of national revolutionary movement report to Stalin], 14 August 1949, CCP Literature Research Center, Central Archives series (Beijing: Central Literature Publishing House, 2005), 51. Liu made this declaration at the November 1949 Asian and Australian Union Conference in Beijing. Mao discussed a "prudent view on China's 'Asian' role" at the CCP Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee. Wu Xiuquan, *Wode licheng* [My historical journey] (Beijing: Liberation Army Press, 1984), 61.

17. "Fu A'lian daojiang Jia'ergeda Shiyantu wangzi zhichu: Ya-Fei ying jinmi tuanjie, xiwang Zhong-Yin liangguo xun heping tujing jie jue bianjie wenti" [On visit to United Arab Emirates via Calcutta: Sihanouk urges Afro-Asian solidarity in hopes that China and India will resolve their boundary dispute through peaceful means], *Mianhua Ribao* [Sino-Khmer Daily; hereafter *MHRB*], 7 November 1959; and Qiang, "Zhong-Jian tesuguanxide xingcheng," 1–3.

18. Luis Eslava, Michael Fakhri, and Vasuki Nesiah, "The Spirit of Bandung." In *Bandung, global History, and International Law: Critical Pasts and Pending Futures*, eds. Luis Eslava, Michael Fakhri, and Vasuki Nesiah (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 3–32. For its use in newspapers, see "Premier Chou En-lai's Main Speech at the Plenary Session of the Asian-African Conference," 19 April 1955, in *China Supports the Arab People's Struggle for National Independence: A Selection of Important Documents*, ed. Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1958), 9–19. An issue of Singapore / Hong Kong-based *Life Daily* (*Shenghuo ribao*) also uses "Bandung Spirit." "Zai huanyinyan Xihanuke qinwang huishang" [At the banquet of Prince Sihanouk], *Shenghuo ribao* [Life Daily (Singapore/Hong Kong)], 18 August 1958.

19. Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, 3, citing Shi Zhe, "With Mao and Stalin: Liu Shaoqi in Moscow," *Chinese Historians* 6 (Spring 1993): 84–85; and Chen Jian, *Chi-*

na's *Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 74–75. See also Niu Jun, *From Yan'an to the World: The Origin and Development of Chinese Communist Foreign Policy*, trans. and ed. Steven I. Levine (Norwalk, CT: Eastbridge, 2005).

20. "More on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," in *The Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1956), 33–34. See also Kang, *Waijiao huiyilu*, 41; and Chen Jian, "China and the Bandung Conference: Changing Perceptions and Representations," in *Bandung Revisited: The Legacy of the Asian-African Conference for the International Order*, ed. Tan See Seng and Amitav Acharya (Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2008), 134–135.

21. "Zhong-Jian liangguojia zongli fabiao lianhe shengming: Jianpuzhai fengxing zhongli zhengce, ying shoudao yiqie guojia zunzhong" [Joint statement by the Chinese and Cambodian premiers: Cambodia's pursuit of neutrality must be respected by every country], *MHRB*, 25 August 1958.

22. Pei Jianzhang, *Zhongguo renmin gongheguo waijiaoshi, 1949–1966* [Diplomatic history of the People's Republic of China, 1949–1956] (Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 1994), 148.

23. Xue Mouhong and Pei Jianzhang, eds. *Dangdai Zhongguo waijiao* [Contemporary Chinese diplomacy]. (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1990), 81–89.

24. On early Sino-Cambodian relations, see Huang Xionglue, *Jianpuzhai shilüe* [A short survey of Kampuchea] (Shanghai: Zhengzhong shuju, 1947), 27–33; Wang Gungwu, "Early Ming Relations with Southeast Asia: A Background Essay," in *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China's Foreign Relations*, ed. John King Fairbank (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 58; and Li Changfu, *Zhongguo zhiminshi* [A history of Chinese colonization] (Shanghai: Shangwu shuju, 1946), 74, 101. On recent relations, see Kang, *Waijiao huiyilu*, 177–226; and Qiang Zhai, "Zhou Enlai yu Zhong-Jian hezuo guanxi de jianli, 1954–1965 nian" [Zhou Enlai establishes cooperative relations with Cambodia, 1954–1965], *Nankai xuebao* (*Zhexue shehui kexueban*) [Nankai Journal (Philosophy and Social Sciences)] 1 (2014): 24–32.

25. Ben Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power: Colonialism, Nationalism, and Communism in Cambodia, 1930–1975*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004), 158–159. On Sihanouk's ideology, see "Zai Renda changwei, zhengxie lianxihui shangyan shuo: Xihanuke chongshen heping zhongli zhengce" [Sihanouk reiterates policy of peace and neutrality—speech at the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and the People's Political Consultative Conference], *Xiamen ribao* [Xiamen Daily (China)], 24 August 1958. On China's support for Cambodian neutrality, see Zhang, *Xihanuke jiazuo*, 114; and Norodom Sihanouk and Bernard Krisher, *Charisma and Leadership: The Human Side of Great Leaders of the Twentieth Century* (Tokyo: Yohan Publications, 1990), 82–83.

26. "Briefing Papers for Saccio Visit," 20 November 1959, in United States National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC, RG59: General Records of the Department of State, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs / Office of Southeast Asian Affairs: Cambodia Files 1958–1963, box 2.

27. Jian An, "Mao Zedong 'Sange shijie huafen' lilunde zhengzhi kaoliang yu shidai jiazhi" [Mao Zedong's "Three Worlds" theory: Political considerations and value

for the times], *Zhongguo shehui kexue* [Social Sciences in China (China)] 1 (2012): 4–26. Qiang Zhai notes that Mao disparaged the “illusion of a third road,” whereas Liu Shaoyi had nothing but contempt for neutral rulers, whom he viewed merely as “stooges of imperialism.” Qiang Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars*, 68.

28. “Xihanuke shuo” [Sihanouk speaks], *RMRB*, 16 July 1956; and Julio Jeldres, “A Personal Reflection on Norodom Sihanouk and Zhou Enlai: An Extraordinary Friendship on the Fringes of the Cold War,” *Cross Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review*, no. 4 (September 2012): 52–64. Foreign Minister Chen Yi spoke favorably of Cambodian prince Sihanouk’s leadership. “Chen Yi fuzhang jianghua” [Vice-Minister Chen Yi’s speech], *Beijing zhoubao* [Peking Review (China)] 8, no. 46 (1965): 4.

29. Chieu, *Wo yu Zhonggong he Jiangong chise huaren jiemi*, 36; and Norodom Sihanouk, “Comment nous voyons la Chine” [How we view China], *Neak Cheat Niyum* [The Nationalist (Cambodia)], 20 September 1963, 7, National Archives of Cambodia (NAC), box 689, ID6061, 1–19. See also “Wangzi haozhao nongmin xuexi Zhongguo jingyan” [Prince calls on farmers to study the Chinese experience], *MHRB*, 7 January 1959; “‘Jianpuzhai xianzhuang’ zhoutan tan Zhong-Jian guanxi dui woguo jieyue nongye wenti banfa gandao xingqu” [“Cambodia situation” weekly discusses China-Cambodia relations: Cambodia is interested in our Chinese way of solving agricultural problems]. *Cankao Xiaoxi* [Reference News (China)], 1 February 1959.

30. Nick Tarling, *Britain and Sihanouk’s Cambodia* (Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2014), 12.

31. “Jian diantai ping Zhong-Jian youhao tiaoyue zhounian: Zhong-Jian jinmi youyi shuoming wuxiang yuanze bing mo siwang” [Cambodian radio broadcast on anniversary of bilateral treaty: Inseparable China-Cambodia friendship united in commitment to Five Principles onto death], *MHRB*, 22 December 1961. See also “Zhou Enlai zongli he Shanyun shouxiang qianshu zhong mian liangguo lianhe shengming jianjue shixian wuxiang yuanze” [Premier Zhou Enlai and Prime Minister Sihanouk sign a joint statement resolutely implementing the Five Principles], *MHRB*, 28 November 1956.

32. *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo waijiaobu waijiao shipian, Zhongguo gailan* [China overview] (Beijing: Shijie zhizhi chubanshe, 1987), 59. See also “Zhong-Jian youhao guanxi xinde lichengbei: Zhong-Jian youhao he hu buqifan tiaoyue shengxiao” [China-Cambodia friendly relations reach a new milestone: The China-Cambodia friendship and nonaggression treaty goes into effect], *Xiamen ribao* [Xiamen Daily (China)], 4 May 1961; and “Zhongguo zhengque zhixing Jian-Zhong maoyi xieding” [China and Cambodia finalize a trade agreement: Chinese experts will not intervene in Cambodian domestic affairs], *MHRB*, 10 July 1964.

33. “Xihanuke shuo zhiyou yige Zhongguo” [Sihanouk says that there is only one China], *Cankao Xiaoxi* [Reference News (Beijing)], 9 October 1961.

34. Norodom Sihanouk, “Condense de l’allocution improvisée par Samdech chef de l’état à Oudong, Kampong Speu” [Excerpt of speech by head of state at Oudong, Kampong Speu province]. *Agence Presse Khmere* (French version) [Khmer Press Agency (Cambodia)], 21 September 1963, 1–2.

35. *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo waijiaobu and Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi*, eds., *Zhou Enlai waijiao wenxuan* [Selected diplomatic papers of Zhou Enlai] (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1990), 388; “Zhongguo zengjian junshi iwuzi: Yijiao yishi longzhong juxing” [China donates military supplies to Cambodia, ceremony

held], *MHRB*, 16 March 1964. On the aid agreement, see Norodom Sihanouk, “Rapport de Samdech chef de l’état au peuple khmer” [Report from Head of State Samdech Sihanouk to the Khmer people], 5 October 1964, 1–5, NAC, box 689, ID6060; and Xue and Pei, *Dangdai Zhongguo waijiao*, 169–170.

36. Zhang, *Xihanuke jiazu*, 114. Liu Shaoqi echoed this sentiment. “Liu Shaoqi zhuxi fuhuan Shiyanu yuanshou zhichu: Jian renmin fan-Mei douzheng bisheng” [Liu Shaoqi states in reply letter to Cambodian head of state Sihanouk: The Cambodian people’s opposition to US imperialism surely to succeed], *MHRB*, 29 March 1964; and “Qiangdiao Zhong-Jian yongyuan youhao” [Emphasize that China, Cambodia are eternal friends], *MHRB*, 7 May 1960; and “Jian youyi baoxuan lunying guibin: Zhongguo shi women chunjie youbang gei Jianpuzhai renmin yi wenuan” [Cambodian friendship report welcomes honored guest: China is our pure and warmest ally] *MHRB*, 4 May 1960.

37. Sihanouk and Krisher, *Charisma and Leadership*, 82–83.

38. Han Xu, “Mao Zedongde minjian waijiao sixiang he zhongyao juece (Mao Zedong’s ideas and important decisions on nongovernmental diplomacy).” In *Mao Zedong waijiao sixiang yanjiu* [Studies on Mao Zedong’s diplomatic thought]. ed. Pei Jianzhang (Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe; Xinhua shudian jingxiao, 1994), 52.

39. “Jian-Zhong youhao xiehui zhangcheng cao’an [China-Cambodia friendship association draft charter],” *MHRB*, 29 May 1961; and Ministère de l’Information (MI), “Revue trimestrielle de l’Association d’amitié khméro-chinoise / Sameakom Mittpheap Khmer-Chen” [Quarterly review of the Khmer-Chinese Friendship Association], no. 1 (January 1965): 6, NAC, Database 5973, box no. 687. On pledges, see “Zhong-Jian reminde xin tiaodong zai yiqi” [The hearts of the peoples of China and Cambodia beat together], *MHRB*, 10 May 1960; “Rang Zhong-Jian youyi zhihua yongyuan shengkai” [Make the Chinese-Cambodian friendship flourish forever], *MHRB*, 7 January 1961; and “Zhong-Jian youyi qing shen sihai” [The China-Cambodia friendship is as deep as the sea], *MHRB*, 11 May 1960.

40. William Willmott, *The Chinese in Cambodia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1967), 89n10.

41. Chieu, *Wo yu Zhonggong he Jiangong chise huaren jiemi*, 36. Wang’s poem was titled “Third Daughter’s Resentment” (*San Niang Yuan*). Its title references the *Lu Lin Hui* drama in which the main character, Jiang Shi, heeds his mother’s demands and tells his wife, Pang Sanniang, to return to her parents’ home. She does so and then one day meets Jiang among the reeds of a river as she searches for fish to give to her mother-in-law.

42. Wang, “Chinese Communist Party’s Relationship with the Khmer Rouge in the 1970s,” 12–13, citing Zhang Qing, “Huiyi xin Zhongguo diydai lingdaoren dui Jianpuzhaide bangzhu (Recollections of Assistance to Cambodia by the First Generation of Chinese Leadership), *Dongnanya congheng* [Around Southeast Asia] 2 (2003):21–26; Fang Yi Zhuan [Biography of Fang Yi] (Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 2008), 407; and Hunt, *Genesis of Chinese Communist Foreign Policy*, 220–221. On CCP support of the Vietnamese struggle, see Qiang, *China and the Vietnam Wars*. On PLA training of foreign insurgents and “benevolent trade,” see Anne-Marie Brady, *Making the Foreign Serve China: Managing Foreigners in the People’s Republic* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 105, 127.

43. Julia Lovell, “The Uses of Foreigners in Mao-Era China: ‘Techniques of Hospitality’ and International Image-Building in the People’s Republic, 1949–1976,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 25 (December 2015): 135.

44. Pol Pot recalled that he had been delegated to “have a meeting with them [the Vietnamese],” after which he visited China. Pol Pot, “Interview with Cai Ximei,” Phnom Penh, May 1984; and Short, *Pol Pot*, 484n159.

45. Knight, *Rethinking Mao*, 217–248.

46. Peter Van Ness, *Revolution and Chinese Foreign Policy: Peking’s Support for Wars of National Liberation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), 13, 212–213; and Li and Xia, *Mao and the Sino-Soviet Split*, 9–31.

47. Ilya Gaiduk, *Confronting Vietnam: Soviet Policy toward the Indochina Conflict, 1954–1963* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 119.

48. Li and Xia, *Mao and the Sino-Soviet Split*, 103; and MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao’s Last Revolution*, 7.

49. “On Khrushchev’s Phony Communism and Its Historical Lessons for the World,” *Peking Review* (17 July 1964), in *Sino-Soviet Relations, 1964–1965*, ed. William Griffith (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1967), 314–350.

50. Zhang Xiangshan, “Sishiniande licheng” [A journey of forty years], in *Zhongli-anbu Sishinian* [Forty years of the International Liaison Department] (Beijing: Renmin huabao, 1992), 24–25; and Wang, “Chinese Communist Party’s Relationship with the Khmer Rouge in the 1970s,” 8.

51. Alexander Cook, “Third World Maoism,” in Cheek, *A Critical Introduction to Mao*, 288.

52. Mao Zedong, *Mao Zedong waijiao wenxuan* [Selected writings of Mao Zedong on foreign affairs] (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxuan chubanshe, 1994), 506–507.

53. Pierre Brocheux and Daniel Hemery, *Indochina: An Ambiguous Colonization, 1858–1954 (From Indochina to Vietnam: Revolution and War in a Global Perspective)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 315–316, 349–350.

54. McAlister Brown and Joseph J. Zasloff, *Apprentice Revolutionaries: The Communist Movement in Laos, 1930–1985* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1986), 47. See also Bernard B. Fall, ed., *Ho Chi Minh on Revolution: Selected Writings, 1920–1966* (London: Pall Mall, 1967), 127–129.

55. David Henley, “Ethnogeographic Integration and Exclusion in Anticolonial Nationalism: Indonesia and Indochina,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 37, no. 2 (April 1995): 296. On “hurt feelings” among Khmers, see Serge Thion, *Watching Cambodia: Ten Paths to Enter the Cambodian Triangle* (Bangkok: White Lotus, 1993), 54.

56. Khieu Samphan, *L’histoire récente du Cambodge et mes prises de position* [Cambodia’s recent history and the reasons behind the decisions I made] (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2004), 62–65.

57. Quoted in Chang Paomin, *Kampuchea between China and Vietnam* (Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 1985), 10n39.

58. Morris, *Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia*, 65–66; and Thion, *Watching Cambodia*, 57.

59. Li Danhui, “Rineiwa huiyishang Zhongguo jieue Yinzhi wenti fangzhen zai tan-tao ladanhui” [Reexploration on China’s policy of solving the Indochina issue at Geneva Conference], *Zhonggong dangshi yanjiu* [CCP History] 8 (2013): 27–41, on 39. See also Du Liangxin and Zhao Heman, eds., *Yuenan Laowo Jianpuzhai shouce* [Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia manual] (Beijing: Shijie chubanshe, 1988), 156.

60. Chang, *Kampuchea between China and Vietnam*, 16–18.

61. Li Danhui, “Lengzhan niandaide Xihanuke qinwang—laizi Jianpuzhai guojia dang’anguande yingxiang ziliao [Prince Sihanouk and the Cold War era—data from the National Archives of Cambodia], *Lengzhan guojishi yanjiu* [Cold War International History Studies] 1 (2013): 375–409.

62. Pol Pot, “Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot,” 14–15.

63. Thomas Engelbert and Christopher E. Goscha, *Falling out of Touch: A Study on Vietnamese Communist Policy towards an Emerging Cambodian Communist Movement, 1930–1975* (Clayton, VIC, Australia: Monash University, 1995), xiii, 120. Sihanouk declared in 1954 that his forces arrested *Khmer Issarak* members, including Siu Heng, who “revealed the names of all the Communist leaders.” Hoang Tung, “Briefing by Hoang Tung, Secretary of Central Committee, Vietnam Communist Party, in Charge of Information and Propaganda,” June 1983, 1, NAC, D18101, box 641.

64. Once separate Cambodian and Lao parties emerged in the 1950s, the WPV’s local branches were only for ethnic Vietnamese in those countries. The WPK was on the CCP’s radar by this time, so a party-to-party framework was in place as a context for future visits.

65. Chieu, *Wo yu Zhonggong he Jiangong chise huaren jiemi*, 41.

66. Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 70–71.

67. Engelbert and Goscha, *Falling out of Touch*, vi.

68. Hoang, “Briefing by Hoang Tung,” 2. Hoang states that he “did not know if they were in contact with them [the secret organizations]—I suspect it but we have no evidence (Sihanouk says they were).” Quote from page 2.

69. Short, *Pol Pot*, 159, 484n159; and Zhang, *Xihanuke jiazhu*, 154. Zhang alleges that Le Duan tried to prevent Pol Pot from leaving for Beijing by delaying the processing of his request for permission to enter China.

70. One exception is Huang Qun, *Liushinian Zhong-Yue guanxizhi jianzheng: yige Zhongguo waijiaoguande shouji* [Witness to sixty years of the China-Vietnam relationship: Notes of a Chinese foreign bureau diplomat] (Hong Kong: Tiandi tushu youxian gongsi, 2014), 99–101. Zhang Xizhen claims that Saloth Sar (*Shaluote Shao*) was in Beijing by the autumn of 1965 and stayed for three months. Zhang, *Xihanuke jiazhu*, 154. Chandler claims Pol Pot was there eleven months between 1965 and 1966 on his trip through Laos, Vietnam, China, and North Korea. Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 66, 69, 71–77. Philip Short claims a December 1965 arrival, when Pol Pot “spent about a month there.” Short, *Pol Pot*, 159. This coincides with Vietnamese documents and Pol Pot’s own account of his first Beijing visit. Pol Pot, “Interview with Cai Ximei.”

71. Chieu, *Wo yu Zhonggong he Jiangong chise huaren jiemi*, 42. Neither Liu Shaoqi nor Deng Xiaoping mentions Pol Pot’s visit in their official chronological biographies; this is likely due to the visit’s secretive nature and their respective post-Mao rehabilitations. Liu Chongwen, Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiu Shi, and Chen Shaouchou, eds., *Liu Shaoqi Nianpu, 1898–1969* [The chronicle of Liu Shaoqi, 1898–1969] (Beijing: Zhongyang Wenxian chubanshe, 1996); and Rong Leng, Zuoling Wang, and Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, eds., *Deng Xiaoping nianpu, 1975–1997* [Chronological biography of Deng Xiaoping, 1975–1997], vol. 1 (Beijing: Zhongyang Wenxian chubanshe, 2004). Official documents do not refer to Pol Pot.

72. Thomas Engelbert, trans., “Excerpts from the Document Entitled ‘Pol Pot Presents the Cambodian Party’s Experiences to Khamtan, the Secretary General of the

Communist Party of Thailand: Informal Talks held in August 1977” (Hanoi: TVQDND, 1977), 23. On the CCP’s official line, see “Butong zhidu guojia youhao gongchude fanli: Zhong-Jian youhao hehu buqinfan tiaoyue zuochen zai Jinbian jiaohuan pizhun wenshu” [The friendly coexistence of countries with different systems of government is a model example: China-Cambodia friendship and nonaggression treaty ratified yesterday morning in Phnom Penh], *MHRB*, 3 May 1961.

73. Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 210. On CCP aid to CPK, see Shi Lin, Lu Xuejian, Wang Wendong, eds., *Dangdai Zhongguode duiwai jingji hezuo* [Contemporary China: Economic cooperation with foreign countries] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1989), 57.

74. Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 73. See also MacFarquhar, *Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, 2:218.

75. Cook, “Third World Maoism,” in Cheek, *A Critical Introduction to Mao*, 290–291.

76. Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 72.

77. Chieu, *Wo yu Zhonggong he Jiangong chise huaren jiemi*, 42.

78. *Quan Diem, duong loi, chinh sach doi ngoai cua Dang Cong san Campuchia* [Foreign policy outlook and line of the Communist Party of Kampuchea] (Hanoi: Thu Vien Quan Doi, circa 1977), 10, as quoted in Engelbert and Goscha, *Falling out of Touch*, 23, 79–80n102.

79. Engelbert, “Excerpts from the Document Entitled ‘Pol Pot Presents,’” 23. Also quoted in Engelbert and Goscha, *Falling out of Touch*, 79.

80. Li Danhui, “Xihanuke, Bo’er Bute, yu shangshiji liuqishi niandaide Zhongguo” [Sihanouk, Pol Pot, and China in the 1960s and 1970s], *Guojia renwen lishi* [National Humanities History], no. 11 (2013): 50.

81. Engelbert, “Excerpts from the Document Entitled ‘Pol Pot Presents,’” 23. On Pol Pot’s acquisition of a French-language *Quotations*, see Sher, “Le parcours politique des khmers rouges,” 121. On CPK internal history attesting to the party’s sponsorship of the uprising, see Ben Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power and Genocide under the Khmer Rouge, 1975–1975* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 126n102.

82. “A Short Guide for Application of Party Statutes,” in *Communist Party Power in Kampuchea (Cambodia): Documents and Discussion*, ed. Timothy M. Carney (Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asia Program, Dept. of Asian Studies, Cornell University, 1977), 56; and Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 190.

83. Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 219–224; and Timothy Carney, “Cambodia: The Unexpected Victory,” in Jackson, *Cambodia 1975–1978*, 24.

84. Quoted in Engelbert and Goscha, *Falling Out of Touch*, 80–81. Engelbert and Goscha reference two sources for this letter: *Quan Diem, duong loi, chinh sach doi ngoai cua Dang Cong san Campuchia*, 14; and *Tim Hieu ve Dang CPC (Du Thao)*. [A study of the Cambodian Communist Party (draft form)]. (Hanoi: Thu vien Quan Doi Nhan Dan, circa early 1980s), 44.

85. French edition: Mao Tsé-toung, *La nouvelle Démocratie* [On new democracy] (Paris: Éditions sociales, 1951).

86. Pol Pot, “Interview with Cai Ximei”; and Short, *Pol Pot*, 477n70.

87. Pol Pot, “Allocution du camarade Pol Pot, secrétaire du comité central du Parti Communiste du Kampuchéa, Premier Ministre du Gouvernement du Kampuchéa Démocratique: Chef de la délégation du Parti Communiste du Kampuchéa et du gou-

vernement du Kampuchéa démocratique a l'occasion du banquet de bienvenue organisé en son honneur par Le Comité Central du Parti Communiste Chinois et le Gouvernement de la République Populaire de Chine" [Speech by Pol Pot, secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kampuchea, prime minister of the Government of Democratic Kampuchea, at a banquet in honor of the delegation of the Chinese Communist Party and the Government of the People's Republic of China], Beijing, 28 September 1977, 8.

88. "Bo'er Bute tongzhi zaijing juxing jizhe zhaodaihui jieshaole Jianpuzhai gongchandang guanghuide zhandou licheng he Jianpuzhai renmin zai Jianpuzhai gongchandang lingdao xia ge fangmian suo qudede weida shengli Jianpuzhai dangzheng daibiaotuan chengyuan Ying Sali, Wen Wei, Han Xiuchen chuxi" [Comrade Pol Pot at a conference held in Beijing describes the great victory in all aspects of the Communist Party of Kampuchea and the glorious history of the Cambodian people's struggle under CPK leadership, delegates Ieng Sary, Wen Wei and Han Xiuchen in attendance], *RMRB*, 3 October 1977, 1.

89. Xu Lanjun, "Translation and Internationalism," in Cook, *Mao's Little Red Book*, 76.

90. Cao, *Zhongguo guojitushu maoyi zonggongshi sishizhounian*, 37, 47. The IB was founded in December 1949 to establish "cultural exchanges between the new China and other countries." Quoted in Xu, "Translation and Internationalism," 83. See also "Guoji gongchanzhuyi yundong shishangde dashijian, wuchan jieji wenhua dageming xinsheng" [The great event in the history of the internationalist movement and the new victory in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution], *RMRB*, 2 July 1967.

91. Fang Houqu, "'Wenge' shinian Mao Zedong zhuzuo, Mao Zedong xian chuban jishi" [Recollections on the publication of Mao Zedong's works and Mao Zedong images during the ten years of the "Cultural Revolution"], in *Zhongguo chuban shiliao (xiandai bufen)* [Historical materials on Chinese publishing (contemporary portion)], ed. Song Yufang, Wu Daohong, Zhang Lisheng, and Wang Jianhui. (Jinan: Shandong jiaoyuchubanshe, 2001), 3.1:233–235. The global imprint of FLP translations counters Mao scholar and doyen Stuart Schram's claim that "to the extent that [Mao's] utterances reflect specifically Chinese interests and are clothed in language that is peculiarly Chinese, they may find little echo outside of China." Schram, *Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*, 112.

92. Xu, "Translation and Internationalism," in Cook, *Mao's Little Red Book*, 76.

93. Daniel Leese, "A Single Spark," in Cook, *Mao's Little Red Book*, 23.

94. Julian Bourg, "Principally Contradiction: The Flourishing of French Maoism," in Cook, *Mao's Little Red Book*, 228. French translations of Russian editions were available earlier to the PCF (Pol Pot, Hou Yuon, and Khieu Samphan were members).

95. Pol Pot, "Allocution du Camarade Pol Pot," 4.

96. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 10–11, 347n33; and Short, *Pol Pot*, 179. On Chinese technical experts in Cambodia, see "Zhongguo zhengque zhixing Jian-Zhong maoyi xieding: Zan Zhongguo zhuanjia bu jieru Jian neizhengde taidu" [China and Cambodia finalize a trade agreement: Chinese experts will not intervene in Cambodian domestic affairs], *MHRB*, 10 July 1964; and "Minzuzhuyizhe zhoutian quanwen fabiao: Zhong-Jian jingji jishu yuanzhu hunhe hangyun gongsi" [Nationalist Weekly full text: China-Cambodia economic and technical assistance exchanged via shipping], *MHRB*, 24 January 1961.

97. Sikœun, *Itinéraire d'un Intellectuel Khmer Rouge*, 57.

98. Milton Osborne, *Sihanouk: Prince of Light, Prince of Darkness* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), 193; and Melvin Gurtov, *China and Southeast Asia: The Politics of Survival* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 79. See also Sher, “Le parcours politique des khmers rouges,” 122; and Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 79.

99. Willmott, *The Chinese in Cambodia*, 11.

100. Short, *Pol Pot*, 179–180.

101. Chieu, *Wo yu Zhonggong he Jiangong chise huaren jiemi*, 36.

102. Zhou Zhongjian, “Zhanhou wushinian Jianpuzhai huarende quzhe licheng” [The twists and turns of Cambodian Chinese in the fifty years after the war], *Nanyang wenti yanjiu* [Study of Southeast Asia Issues (China)] 1 (1996): 25; and Chieu, *Wo yu Zhonggong he Jiangong chise huaren jiemi*, 36–47.

103. Chieu, *Wo yu Zhonggong he Jiangong chise huaren jiemi*, 36–37; and Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 347n33. William Willmott notes that out of as many as thirteen newspapers published in Phnom-Penh in 1962–1963, “five were Chinese, accounting for almost three-fifths of newspaper readership . . . [and] about half the Chinese adult population of the capital reads at least one Chinese newspaper daily. Many read several papers.” Among those Chinese-language newspapers, he continues, “the *Mian-Hua* [*Mianhua ribao*] and *Gong-shang* [*Gongshang ribao*] are the, most important, carrying local and international, financial and commercial news.” Willmott, *The Chinese in Cambodia*, 89.

104. “Jian-Zhong youhao xiehui zhangcheng cao’an” [China-Cambodia friendship association draft charter], *MHRB*, 29 May 1961.

105. Gloria Emerson, “After Prison in Cambodia an Intellectual Needs to Talk,” *New York Times*, 13 April 1970.

106. Phouk Chhay, “Secktī rāykār(n) jūn Angkarpaks” [Report to the party organization], S-21, Tuol Sleng Prison, 15 March 1977, 9, DCCAM, No. D13823.

107. Hu Nim, “Camlœy Hu Nim hau Phoas Krasouñ Ghosnākār ambi Pravatti Paks Se Aī Aā” [Confession of Hu Nim, a.k.a. Phoas, minister of information, on his time with the CIA], S-21, Tuol Sleng Prison, 2 May 1977, 8, DCCAM, No. D00067. See also Hu Nim, “Planning the Past: The Forced Confessions of Hu Nim (Tuol Sleng Prison, May-June 1977),” trans. Chanthou Boua, in *Pol Pot Plans the Future: Confidential Leadership Documents from Democratic Kampuchea, 1976–1977*, ed. and trans. David Chandler, Ben Kiernan, and Chanthou Boua (New Haven, CT: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, Center for International and Area Studies, 1988), 242–243.

108. Nim, “Camlœy Hu Nim hau Phoas Krasouñ Ghosnākār ambi Pravatti Paks Se Aī Aā,” 10.

109. The ceremony was likely held at Chaktomuk Conference Hall (Salle de conference / salosanniseit Chaktomuk). Bassac did not open until 1968.

110. Chieu, *Wo yu Zhonggong he Jiangong chise huaren jiemi*, 36–38.

111. Gurtov, *China and Southeast Asia: The Politics of Survival*, 77–78. On local Chinese enthusiasm, see Chieu, *Wo yu Zhonggong he Jiangong chise huaren jiemi*, 35–36.

112. Mertha, *Brothers in Arms*, 22. Characteristic of this radical period of foreign affairs was an 11 July 1967 diplomatic note sent to the Chinese embassy in Yangon. The note stated that Mao “is the very red sun that shines most brightly in our hearts and Mao [Zedong’s] thought is our lifeline. . . . Anyone who dares to oppose Chair-

man Mao and Mao [Zedong's] thought is hitting his head against a brick wall and inviting his own destruction." *Peking Review*, no. 30 (1967): 39.

113. "Sihanouk Cautions CPR about Intervention: Excerpts of 80-Minute Speech by Prince Norodom Sihanouk during a Mass Demonstration on 13 September in Front of the Royal Palace in Phnom Penh," Phnom Penh Domestic Service 0630 GMT, 13 September 1967. Sihanouk preferred to maintain ties with Beijing and Moscow and did not wish to allow the Chinese to undermine his ties with Moscow and jeopardize Soviet aid. He had no reason to oppose Moscow on ideological grounds and disapproved of Chinese propaganda to that end in Cambodia.

114. Jeldres, "Personal Reflection on Norodom Sihanouk and Zhou Enlai," 52–64. See also Tie Ge, *Zhulang Meihe: Hongse Gaomian shilu* [Waves through the Mekong River: A faithful record of the Khmer Rouge] (Hong Kong: Ming Pao Publications, 2008), 2:487–503.

115. Julian Bourg, "The Red Guards of Paris: French Student Maoism of the 1960s," *History of European Ideas* 31 (2005): 473.

116. Pol Pot, "Allocution de Camarade Pol Pot," 7.

117. Mao Zedong, "The Chinese Revolution, and the Chinese Communist Party," December 1939, in *MRP*, 7:299.

118. Lin Biao, "Long Live the Victory of People's War!"

119. Mao's antiurbanism shares certain similarities with Euro-American intellectual tradition. Jean-Jacques Rousseau held that cities were the "embodiment of all social evils and moral corruptions." Quoted in Xiaomei Chen, *Occidentalism: A Theory of Counter-Discourse in Post-Mao China* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), 4. Similarities are apparent in CPK antiurbanism, itself shaped somewhat by Rousseau (an early influence on the CPK founders). James Tyner, *The Killing of Cambodia: Geography, Genocide, and the Unmaking of Space* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008), 113–114.

120. Hu Nim, "Les services publics économiques au Cambodge" [Economic public services of Cambodia] (PhD diss., Université Royale, Phnom Penh, 1965), 95.

121. Lucien Bianco, "Peasant Responses to CCP Mobilization Policies, 1937–1945," in Saich and van de Ven, *New Perspectives on the Chinese Communist Revolution*, 175–180.

122. Mao Zedong, "Diudiao huanxiang, zhunbei douzheng" [Cast away illusions, prepare for struggle], in *MZJ*, 7:320–321.

123. Lin Biao, "Long Live the Victory of People's War!"

124. Ieng Sary, "Kingdom of Cambodia National United Front of Kampuchea: Cambodia 1972," 1 January 1970, 6–7, DCCAM, No. D24010.

125. Pol Pot, "Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot," 35–36.

126. Nuon Chea, "Excerpts from Broadcast Extracts from Speech by Nuon Chea, Chairman of the People's Representative Assembly Standing Committee and Acting Premier, at 16th January Meeting Marking the Cambodian Revolutionary Army Anniversary," Phnom Penh, 17 January 1977, FE/5415/B/1, NAC, box 689, ID 6093.

127. Mao Zedong, "On New Democracy," 15 January 1940, in *MRP*, 7:334.

128. Mao Zedong, "Lun renmin minzhu zhuanzheng" [On the people's democratic dictatorship], in *MZJ*, 10:303–304.

129. Intriguingly, Ho Chi Minh founded the Viet Minh "on the basis of the principles set out in this [Mao's] speech," and Indochinese Communist Party secretary general Truong Chinh prophesied a future in which "New Democracy [will] cover a

continuous expanse reaching from Central Europe to [Vietnam's] Cape Camau." Short, *Pol Pot*, 70.

130. Short, *Pol Pot*, 477n70.

131. Pol Pot, "Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot," 16–67; and *Dan' Pativatt* [Revolutionary Flag], no. 11 (11 November 1976): 76, DCCAM, No. D21419.

132. Pol Pot, "Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot," 16. Ieng Sary elaborated that in DK, education "closely links theory and practice in the particular conditions of our country." Sary, "Cambodia 1972," 11.

133. Jowitt, *New World Disorder*, 16–17.

134. Mao Zedong, "On the Question of the Differentiation of the Three Worlds," in *Mao Zedong on Diplomacy*, ed. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China and the Party Literature Research Center under the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1998), 454. Another motivating factor was Moscow's 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia to put down the Prague Spring.

135. Richardson, *China, Cambodia, and the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence*, 76.

136. Lin Biao, "Report to the Ninth National Congress of the Communist Party of China," 1 April 1969, *Marxists Internet Archive* www.marxists.org/reference/archive/lin-biao/1969/04/01.htm.

137. Cook, "Third World Maoism," in Cheek, *A Critical Introduction to Mao*, 296.

138. Niu Jun, "Chongjian Zhong-Jian didai—Zhongguo Yazhou zhengcede yuanqi (1949–1955)" [The reconstruction of the "Intermediate Zone": The origins of China's Asia policy, 1949–1955], *Guoji zhengzhi yanjiu (jikan)* 2 [International Politics (Quarterly)] (2012): 61–80.

139. Mao Zedong, "On the Question of the Differentiation of the Three Worlds," 454.

140. Zhou Enlai, "Report on the Work of the Government to the Fourth National People's Congress," 18 January 1975, in *Chinese Politics: Ninth Party Congress (1969) to the Death of Mao (1976)*, ed. James T. Myers, Jurgen Domes, and Erik on Groeling (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989), 297.

141. Michael Schoenhals, "Mao Zedong: Speeches at the 1957 'Moscow Conference,'" *Journal of Communist Studies* 2, no. 2 (1986): 109–126.

142. Cook, "Third World Maoism," in Cheek, *A Critical Introduction to Mao*, 297.

143. Samir Amin, "Les effets structurels de l'intégration internationale des économies précapitalistes: Une étude technique du mécanisme qui a engendrer les économies dites sous-développées" [The structural effects of the international integration of precapitalist economies: A technical study of the mechanism that engendered underdeveloped economies] (PhD diss., Université de Paris, 1957), 9, 139–141.

144. Amin, "Les effets structurels de l'intégration internationale des économies précapitalistes," 1, 128.

145. Samir Amin, *Theory Is History* (Heidelberg, Germany: Springer, 2014), 77–78.

146. Amin, "Les effets structurels de l'intégration internationale des économies précapitalistes," 484–485, 625–626.

147. Penny Edwards, *Cambodge: The Cultivation of a Nation, 1860–1945* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007), 144.

148. John Tully, *Cambodia under the Tricolor: King Sisowath and the 'Mission Civilisatrice' 1904–1927* (Clayton, VIC, Australia: Monash Asia Institute, 1996), 310–311.

149. Michitake Aso, "Rubber and Race in Rural Colonial Cambodia (1920s-1954)," *Siksacakr: The Journal of Cambodia Research*, nos. 12–13 (2010–2011): 127–138; and Penny Edwards, "The Tyranny of Proximity: Power and Mobility in Colonial Cambodia, 1863–1954," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 37, no. 3 (October 2006): 429, citing Georges Groslier, "La fin d'un art" [The end of an art], *Revue des Arts Asiatiques* [Asian Arts Review] 6, no. 3 (1929–1930): 179–180.

150. "Extraits des rapports politiques des Résidents destinés au 2^{ème} Bureau (affaires indigènes)" [Extracts from the political reports of the Residents intended for the 2nd Bureau, indigenous affairs], 1906–1910, Archives Nationales d'Outre Mer (ANOM), Résident Supérieur du Cambodge (RSC) 415. A 1908 *Résidence Supérieure* report from Takéo noted that Khmer functionaries there possessed an "extraordinary indolence," whereas village chiefs "always show indifference, insouciance, and bad-will."

151. Charles Bilodeau, "Compulsory Education in Cambodia," in *Compulsory Education in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam*, ed. Charles Bilodeau, Somlith Pathammavong, and Le Quang Hong (Paris: UNESCO, 1955); Brocheux and Hemery, *Indochina*, 287; and G. H. Monod, *Le Cambodgien* [The Cambodian] (Paris: Editions Larose, 1931), 31–35.

152. Samphan, "L'économie du Cambodge et ses problèmes d'industrialisation," 60–65, 192.

153. Pol Pot, "Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot," 20–21.

154. Tyner, *Killing of Cambodia*, 113.

155. William Willmott, "Analytical Errors of the Kampuchean Communist Party," *Pacific Affairs* 54, no. 2 (Summer 1981): 224; and Ben Kiernan, "The 1970 Peasant Uprising in Kampuchea," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 9, no. 3 (1979): 310–324.

3. The Origins of Cambodia's Maoist Vision

1. Goebel, *Anti-imperial Metropolis*, 2.

2. Serge Thion, "The Cambodian Idea of Revolution," in *Revolution and Its Aftermath in Kampuchea*, ed. David Chandler and Ben Kiernan (New Haven, CT: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1983), 21.

3. Short, *Pol Pot*, 47.

4. Edwards, *Cambodge*, 241.

5. Thion, "Cambodian Idea of Revolution," in Chandler and Kiernan, *Revolution and Its Aftermath in Kampuchea*, 21.

6. Alex Hinton, *Why Did They Kill? Cambodia in the Shadow of Genocide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 23.

7. Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 26.

8. Y. Vasilkov, "Kampuchea: The Maoist 'Experiment' That Failed," *Far Eastern Affairs* 3, no. 21 (1979): 44–45. On the CPK's nationalism and Marxist-Leninist orientation, see Ben Kiernan, "Myth, Nationalism, and Genocide," *Journal of Genocide Research* 3, no. 2 (2001): 187–206. On Vietnamese influence, see Heder, *Cambodian Communism and the Vietnamese Model*, 1:3.

9. Morris, *Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia*, 13, 17, 39, 229; Karl Jackson, "Intellectual Origins of the Khmer Rouge," in Jackson, *Cambodia 1975–1978*, 241–250; Kenneth Quinn, "Explaining the Terror," in Jackson, *Cambodia 1975–78*, 219–223; and Kate Frieson, "The Political Nature of Democratic Kampuchea," *Pacific Affairs* 61, no. 3 (Autumn 1988):

405–406. On the CPK's "high" modernism, see Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 48. On CPK Maoism as a by-product of indigenous and exogenous sources, see Ben Kiernan, "External and Indigenous Sources of Khmer Rouge Ideology," in Westad and Quinn-Judge, *Third Indochina War*, 187–206. Some blame China for CPK atrocities. V. Simonov, *Crimes of the Maoists and Their Rout* (Moscow: Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, 1979); Kenneth M. Quinn, "Origins and Development of Radical Cambodian Communism" (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 1982), 180–215; and Daniel Snyder, "Life after Death in the Kampuchean Hell," *Executive Intelligence Review*, September 1981, 19–31.

10. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), 3.

11. Gwen Wright, *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 180. See also Edwards, *Cambodge*, 19–63. On "manufacturing," specifically on Jesuit "fictive roots" of Confucius and Confucianism, see Lionel Jensen, *Manufacturing Confucianism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997).

12. See Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994).

13. David Chandler, "Maps for the Ancestors: Sacralized Topography and Echoes of Angkor in Two Cambodian Texts," in *Facing the Cambodian Past: Selected Essays, 1971–1994*, ed. David Chandler (Chiang Mai, Thailand: Silkwork Books, 1998), 15–44.

14. Milton Osborne, *The French Presence in Cochinchina and Cambodia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1969), 31–32; and Tully, *Cambodia under the Tricolour*, ix.

15. Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* [What is a nation?], trans. Ethan Rundell (Paris: Presses-Pocket, 1992), 3.

16. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 51; and Edwards, *Cambodge*, 145–165.

17. Panivong Norindr, *Phantasmic Indochina: French Colonial Ideology in Architecture, Film, and Literature* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 14–33.

18. Anthony Barnett, "Cambodia Will Never Disappear," *New Left Review* 180 (1990): 101–125.

19. Henley, "Ethnogeographic Integration and Exclusion in Anticolonial Nationalism," 306, 312.

20. Frank Dikotter, *The Discourse of Race in Modern China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992), 61–96.

21. Martial Merlin, *Conseil de Gouvernement de l'Indochine, Session Ordinaire de 1923* [Government Council of Indochina, Ordinary Session of 1923] (Hanoi: Imprimerie de l'Extreme-Orient, 1923), 13.

22. Edwards, *Cambodge*, 242.

23. Elizabeth Becker, *When the War Was Over: The Voices of Cambodia's Revolution and Its People* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986), 54.

24. Edwards, *Cambodge*, 2, 62, 245. *Khmer Toem* is a pseudonym that Saloth Sar/Pol Pot used when he authored his first political writing, "Monarchy or Democracy?"

25. Anne Hansen, *How to Behave: Buddhism and Modernity in Colonial Cambodia, 1860–1930* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007), 20.

26. Alain Forest, "Buddhism and Reform: Imposed Reforms and Popular Aspirations," in *People of Virtue: Reconfiguring Religion, Power, and Morality in Cambodia Today*, ed. Alexandra Kent and David P. Chandler (Copenhagen, Denmark: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2008), 17. See also Anne Hansen, "Modernism and Morality in Colonial Cambodia," in Kent and Chandler, *People of Virtue*, 40–41.

27. Geoffrey Gunn, *Monarchical Manipulation in Cambodia: France, Japan, and the Sihanouk Crusade for Independence* (Copenhagen, Denmark: Nordic Institute for Asian Studies Press, 2018), 30.

28. Edwards, *Cambodge*, 166–182; Becker, *When the War Was Over*, 55–57; and Hansen, *How to Behave*, 1–3, 64–75. On education, see Thomas Clayton, “Restriction or Resistance? French Colonial Education Development in Cambodia,” *Education Policy Analysis Archives* (1995): 9–10; Jean Delvert, “L’œuvre française d’enseignement au Cambodge” [French teaching initiatives in Cambodia], *France-Asie* 13 (1956): 125–127, 309–320; and R. Morizon, *Monographie du Cambodge* [Monograph of Cambodia] (Hanoi: Imprimerie d’Extrême-Orient, 1931), 181. The first lycée in Phnom Penh did not open its doors until the 1930s. A “handful of young aristocrats like Sihanouk,” however, went to study in Saigon or Hanoi. Thion, “The Cambodian Idea of Revolution,” in Chandler and Kiernan, *Revolution and Its Aftermath*, 14.

29. Edwards, *Cambodge*, 73, 182, 188. On Buddhist educators, see M. Magnant, “Notes sur les débuts de l’enseignement français au Cambodge (1863–1890)” [Notes on the beginnings of French teaching in Cambodia, 1863–1890], *Revue Indochinoise* [Indochina Review (Hanoi)] 19, no. 4 (1913): 454–469; and Henri Russier, “L’enseignement élémentaire au Cambodge” [Basic education in Cambodia], *Revue Indochinoise* [Indochina Review (Vietnam)] 19, no. 4 (1913): 409–420.

30. Brocheux and Hemery, *Indochina*, 289.

31. Henley, “Ethnogeographic Integration and Exclusion in Anticolonial Nationalism,” 293.

32. Brocheux and Hemery, *Indochina*, 287; and Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 6–9.

33. Khoon Choy Lee, *Golden Dragon and the Purple Phoenix: The Chinese and Their Multi-Ethnic Descendants in Southeast Asia* (Singapore: World Scientific, 2013), 274.

34. Nim, “Camlœy Hu Nim hau Phoas Krasouñ Ghosnākār am̐bi Pravatti Paks Se Aī Aā,” 1–2; Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 29; and Timothy M. Carney, “Biographical Sketches,” in Carney, *Communist Party Power in Kampuchea*, 64.

35. Nate Thayer, “My Education: How Saloth Sar Became Pol Pot,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 30 October 1997, 2. See also Tyner, *Killing of Cambodia*, 45. Pol Pot mentioned in an interview that his parents wrote his birthday on the wall in his home, the Khmer lunar year’s second month (*pus*) and year ox (*chlūv*). This date remained secret, known only by his closest surviving family members.

36. Tully, *Cambodia under the Tricolor*, 309–310. Serge Thion notes that a lycée “was not established in Phnom Penh until the 1930s,” so young aristocrats like Sihanouk studied in lycées in Saigon or Hanoi. Thion, “Cambodian Idea of Revolution,” 14.

37. Tyner, *Killing of Cambodia*, 35.

38. Sikœun, *Itinéraire d’un Intellectuel Khmer Rouge*, 39.

39. Edwards, *Cambodge*, 62.

40. Short, *Pol Pot*, 47.

41. M. Humbert-Hesse, “Rapport General sur l’Enseignement au Cambodge (Janvier 1923)” [General report on instruction in Cambodia, January 1923], 10 January 1923, ANOM RSC 304.

42. For another instance of perverse incentive in French colonial Indochina, see Michael Vann and Liz Clarke, *The Great Hanoi Rat Hunt: Empire, Disease, and Modernity in French Colonial Vietnam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

43. Edwards, *Cambodge*, 224. An editorial from 1936 states, “Old Cambodians saw a near future where all the posts in the French administration would be occupied by . . . graduates of the Lycée Sisowath.” “Une irréparable faute politique” [An irreparable political mistake], *Le Khmer* [The Khmer (Cambodia)], 18 May 1936, 1.

44. Becker, *When the War Was Over*, 69. Originally Collège Sisowath, it became a lycée in 1935. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 129. Pol Pot did not participate in the lycée cohort with Yuon and Nim, an intimation of the rebel he would become while in France.

45. Henley, “Ethnogeographic Integration and Exclusion in Anticolonial Nationalism,” 293.

46. “Interview with Khieu Samphan,” *Le Monde*, 31 December 1998.

47. Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 32, 91n29; Osborne, *Sihanouk*, 65; and Xu, “Bo’er Bute,” 219.

48. Emerson, “After Prison in Cambodia an Intellectual Needs to Talk”; and Chhay, “Seckti räykār(n) jün Angkarpaks,” 3.

49. Thion, “Cambodian Idea of Revolution,” 14; and Sihanouk and Krisher, *Charisma and Leadership*, 167.

50. Sikœun, *Itinéraire d’un Intellectuel Khmer Rouge*, 39.

51. Jean-Louis Margolin, “Cambodge: Au pays du crime d’econcertant” [Cambodia: A country of disconcerting crimes], in *Le Livre noir du communisme: Crimes, terreur et répression* [The black book of Communism: Crimes, terror, repression], ed. Stéphane Courtois et al. (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1997), 684.

52. Sikœun, *Itinéraire d’un Intellectuel Khmer Rouge*, 39. His university professor in Paris-Sorbonne, Albert Soboul, authored a book on the French Revolution that was Sikœun’s “bedside book for a long time.” Sikœun, *Itinéraire d’un Intellectuel Khmer Rouge*, 39.

53. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 51.

54. Royaume du Cambodge, Ministère de l’Education, *Contrôle des étudiants boursiers: Carnet 1* [Controlling student scholars: Notebook 1], manuscript, n.d. ca. 1960, Echols Collection, Cornell University, N158; Kiernan, *Pol Pot Regime*, 10. Chandler, Kiernan, and Xu date Pol Pot’s arrival to October 1949 or 1950. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 51; Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 29, 119; Xu Yan, “Bo’er Bute: ‘Zuohuo’ de yimian jingzi” [Pol Pot: Reflection of a “leftist disaster”], *Bainianchao* [Hundred Years Tide (China)] 3 (2001): 219; and Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 21. Ieng Sary claims that Samphan was among this group in 1946.

55. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 29–31.

56. Etcheson, *Rise and Demise of Democratic Kampuchea*, 30.

57. Ranking members in 1951 included Keng Vannsak (vice president) and Vann Molyvann (president). *Khemara Nissit* [Khmer Student], no. 11 (January 1951): 9, NAC, box 673.

58. Martin, *Cambodia*, 97; Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 52; Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 25; and Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 57.

59. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 52. On Communism in Paris in the early 1950s, see Jeanine Verdes Leroux, *Au service du Parti: Le parti communiste, les intellectuels, et le culture (1944–1956)* [In service to the party: The Communist Party, intellectuals, and culture (1944–1956)] (Paris: Fayard, 1985); and Dominique Dessanti, *Les stalinien*s [The Stalinists] (Paris: Fayard, 1975).

60. On exegetical bonding in Yan'an, see Apter and Saich, *Revolutionary Discourse in Mao's Republic*, 263–293. Vergès was active in PCF student circles at this time.

61. Sikœun, *Itinéraire d'un Intellectuel Khmer Rouge*, 75.

62. Pol Pot, "Interview with Cai Ximei."

63. Christel Pilz, "Khieu Samphan: Giving Up on Socialism?," *Asia Record* (October 1980), 13.

64. Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 27; and Martin, *Cambodia*, 96–97.

65. Engelbert and Goscha, *Falling out of Touch*, 54.

66. Khemara Nissit [Khmer Student] 11 (January 1951): 13–14, NAC, box 673; Pol Pot, "Interview with Cai Ximei"; Short, *Pol Pot*, 475–476n63; and Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 119–121.

67. Ben Kiernan, *Blood and Soil: A World History of Genocide and Extermination from Sparta to Darfur* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 28, 543–544.

68. Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 120; Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 26, 33; Short, *Pol Pot*, 50; Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 54.

69. Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 33. On Mey Mann, see Pin Sisovann, "KR Intellectual, Friend of Pol Pot, Passes Away," *Cambodia Daily*, 18 August 2001. On discussion groups, see François Debré, *Cambodge: La révolution de la forêt* [Cambodia: The forest revolution] (Paris: Club français du livre, 1976), 81.

70. Sher, *Le Kampuchéa des "Khmers rouges,"* 76. For instance, an early Cercle leader, Thiounn Mumm, came from a prominent nonroyal family and was a standard-bearer for the AEK's nationalist pro-Son Ngoc Thanh tendency. Tyner, *Killing of Cambodia*, 46.

71. Pol Pot, "Interview with Cai Ximei."

72. Short, *Pol Pot*, 65.

73. Short, *Pol Pot*, 66.

74. Ian Harris, *Buddhism in a Dark Age: Cambodian Monks under Pol Pot* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2013), 54.

75. Short, *Pol Pot*, 59.

76. Saltoh Sar (hereafter Pol Pot), "Reacheathibtey ry Brâchathibtey?," *Khemara Nissit* [Khmer Student], no. 14 (August 1952): 41–42, DCCAM, Phnom Penh, No. D00084.

77. Anna Belogurova, "Communism in South East Asia," in Smith, *Oxford Handbook of the History of Communism*, 236–251; Alexander Vatlin and Stephen A. Smith, "The Comintern," in Smith, *Oxford Handbook of the History of Communism*, 190–199; Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 119–121; Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 26–33; Sher, "Le parcours politique des 'Khmers Rouges,'" 89–98, 119–121; and Short, *Pol Pot*, 51 (Vannsak's address), 63–64; Short, *Pol Pot*, 50; Debré, *Cambodge*, 77–95. On French versions of Mao's works as Cercle materials, see Sher, "Le parcours politique des khmers rouges," 78, 121.

78. Ieng Sary, letter to Khieu Thirith, "Participation d'Étudiants Cambodgiens au 'Congrès International des Étudiants' à Berlin, Organisés par les Communistes" [Participation of Cambodian students in the Communist-organized "International Student Congress" in Berlin], Paris, 31 July 1951, 1–2, ANOM, Haut Commissariat de France pour l'Indochine, Service de Protection du corps Expéditionnaire (INDO HCI SPCE) 110; and "Note pour le Monsieur le Commissaire de la République au 'Congrès Internationale des Étudiants' à Berlin-Est" [Note for the commissioner of the republic at the "International Student Congress" in East Berlin], Phnom Penh, 3 August 1951,

No. 4847, 1–2, ANOM INDO HCI SPCE 110. See also Jacques Complin, “Note pour Monsieur le Ministre d’État chargé des Relations avec les États Associés, Affaires Politiques” [Note for the minister of state for relations with associated states, political affairs], Saigon, 10 April 1952, 662/APX, 1, ANOM INDO HCI SPCE 110.

79. Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 35; and Martin, *Cambodia*, 97–98.

80. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 55. Issarak was an anticolonial Cambodian independence movement.

81. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 53.

82. Moderates: Vann Molyvann, Yem Sarong, Hang Tun Hak, and Tan Kim Huon. Right-wing: May Say, Long Pet, Douc Rasy, Douc Phana, Sam Sary, and Prom Tos. Communist: Ieng Sary, Pol Pot, Thiounn Mumm, Khieu Samphan, Keng Vannsak, Sin Khem Ko, Hou Yuon, and Phung Ton.

83. Martin, *Cambodia*, 98.

84. On AEK support of Democrats, see Pol Pot, “Reacheathibtey ry Brâchathibtey?,” 39. French version in *Khmers Rouges: Matériaux pour l’histoire du communisme au Cambodge* [Khmer Rouge: Materials for the history of Communism in Cambodia], ed. Serge Thion and Ben Kiernan (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1981), 357.

85. The identity of Kœuss’s murderer was a mystery. Some accused Yem Sambaur. Henri Locard, personal communication to author, 1 November 2020.

86. Quoted in Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 121.

87. Short, *Pol Pot*, 80.

88. “Lettre de l’Association des Étudiants Khmers en France à Sa Majesté Norodom Syhanouk [sic], Roi du Cambodge” [Letter from the Khmer Students Association in France to His Majesty Norodom Sihanouk, king of Cambodia], *Khemara Nissit* [Khmer Student (Cambodia)], no. 14 (6 July 1952), n.p.

89. Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 121. On UEK formation and date, see Martin, *Cambodia*, 99–100.

90. Pilz, “Khieu Samphan: Giving Up on Socialism?,” 13.

91. Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 28, 33, 35; Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 8; and Sher, *Le Kampuchéa des “Khmers Rouges,”* 30.

92. Martin, *Cambodia*, 99.

93. Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 27–28; and Engelbert and Goscha, *Falling Out of Touch*, 54–55.

94. Quoted in Martin, *Cambodia*, 99 (emphasis added).

95. Arif Dirlik, “Modernism and Antimodernism in Mao Zedong’s Marxism,” in Dirlik, Healy, and Knight, *Critical Perspectives on Mao Zedong’s Thought*, 70.

96. These avant-garde writings on Cambodian society, along with the 1976 Four Year Plan, represent the only texts on the CPK’s economic designs for Cambodia (Radio Phnom Penh “hardly gives much depth” on the party’s vision). Sher, “Le parcours politique des ‘Khmers Rouges,’” 72.

97. Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 121–122. Other contributors signed as *Khmer Serei* (Free Khmer). Vannsak stated it “was in common use. It simply meant ‘Old Khmer,’ or ‘Ancestor.’ . . . It had no revolutionary significance. . . . The idea was rather that of a sage.” Short, *Pol Pot*, 477n79.

98. Kiernan, *Blood and Soil*, 28, 543–544. On “original culture,” see Keng Vannsak, “Recherche d’un fonds culturel Khmer” [Research on Khmer cultural inventory] (PhD diss., Université de Paris IV, 1971).

99. Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 25
100. Pol Pot, “Rājādhipiteyy ñ Prajādhipiteyy?,” 39.
101. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 64. See also Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 121–122.
102. Pol Pot, “Rājādhipiteyy ñ Prajādhipiteyy?,” 39.
103. Pol Pot, “Rājādhipiteyy ñ Prajādhipiteyy?,” 40–41.
104. Gunn, *Monarchical Manipulation in Cambodia*, 31.
105. Pol Pot, “Rājādhipiteyy ñ Prajādhipiteyy?,” 41–42. See also Harris, *Buddhism in a Dark Age*, 45.
106. Henri Locard, “Achar Hem Chieu (1898–1943), the ‘Umbrella Demonstration’ of 20th July 1942 and the Vichy Regime,” *Sikhsacokr* 8–9 (2006–2007): 70–81; and John Tully, *France on the Mekong: A History of the Protectorate in Cambodia, 1863–1953* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2002), 372–377.
107. Mao Zedong, “Minzhongde dalianhe” [The great union of the popular masses], in *MZJ*, 1:57–70.
108. Pol Pot, “Rājādhipiteyy ñ Prajādhipiteyy?,” 43. All names appear in French in the original issue, though Pol Pot wrote “DATON” instead of Danton.
109. Pol Pot, “Rājādhipiteyy ñ Prajādhipiteyy?,” 41–44. See also Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 37–38.
110. Short, *Pol Pot*, 80.
111. Pol Pot, “Rājādhipiteyy ñ Prajādhipiteyy?,” 41–42. See also Harris, *Buddhism in a Dark Age*, 45.
112. Henri Locard, personal communication to author, 1 November 2020.
113. Pol Pot, “Rājādhipiteyy ñ Prajādhipiteyy?,” 45–46.
114. Sher, “Le parcours politique des Khmers Rouges,” 87.

4. Integrating Truth with Concrete Practice

1. Samphan, *L’histoire récente du Cambodge et mes prises de position*, 67–68. Some view Samphan’s analysis as a guide to formulating DK’s rural policy. Karl Jackson, “Intellectual Origins of the Khmer Rouge,” in Jackson, *Cambodia 1975–1978*, 245–246; Willmott, “Analytical Errors of the Kampuchean Communist Party,” 212, 216, 221; Frieson, “Political Nature of Democratic Kampuchea,” 422–423; and Tyner, *Killing of Cambodia*, 113.
2. Gunn, *Monarchical Manipulation in Cambodia*, 140–141.
3. Ben Kiernan, “Introductory Note,” in Kiernan and Boua, *Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea*, 31.
4. Gunn, *Monarchical Manipulation in Cambodia*, 134.
5. Only Sher’s *Le Kampuchéa des “Khmers rouges”* and earlier “Le parcours politique des khmers rouges” have done so. Translated excerpts in Kiernan and Boua, *Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea*, 34–68, 69–86.
6. Duiker, “Seeds of the Dragon,” in Dirlik, Healy, and Knight, *Critical Perspectives on Mao Zedong’s Thought*, 313–341.
7. Etcheson, *Rise and Demise of Democratic Kampuchea*, 51; and William Shawcross, *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon, and the Destruction of Cambodia* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1979), 240–246. See also William Willmott, “Research in Cambodia, Half a Century Ago,” *Cross Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review*, no. 4 (September 2012): 21n21.

8. Sher, *Le Kampuchéa des "Khmers rouges,"* 207.
9. Chhay, "Secktī rāykār(ṇ) jūn Angkarpaks," 9–10.
10. Ben Kiernan, "Wild Chickens, Farm Chickens, and Cormorants: Kampuchea's Eastern Zone under Pol Pot," in Chandler and Kiernan, *Revolution and Its Aftermath in Kampuchea*, 175.
11. Chhay, "Secktī rāykār(ṇ) jūn Angkarpaks," 9. Leng Ngeth (1900–1975) was acting AAKC president and served as Cambodian ambassador to the PRC. *La Dépêche* [The Dispatch], 22 December 1965, 3.
12. Sher, *Le Kampuchéa des "Khmers rouges,"* 290; and Sikœun, *Itinéraire d'un Intellectuel Khmer Rouge*, 452.
13. Former CPK members confirmed in France that Yuon, "former Minister of the Interior and the Minister for Co-operatives in Kampuchea [,] had been accused of 'treason' and shot." Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), "Former Cambodian Officials Discuss Purges," *Daily Report, Asia and Pacific* (AP) 78–128 (3 July 1978): K13.
14. Peter Sainsbury and Chea Sotheacheath, "Good Intentions Paved Road to Mass Murder," *Phnom Penh Post*, 14 April 2000, 8–9.
15. Heder, *Cambodian Communism and the Vietnamese Model*, 1:2, 8; Sikœun, *Itinéraire d'un Intellectuel Khmer Rouge*, 39–41; and Mosyakov, "Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese Communists," in Cook, *Genocide in Cambodia and Rwanda*, 49.
16. Short, *Pol Pot*, 290.
17. Mao Zedong, "Xingguo Investigation," October 1930, in MRP, 3:594–655.
18. Khatharya Um, *From the Land of Shadows: War, Revolution, and the Making of the Cambodian Diaspora* (New York: NYU Press, 2015), 88.
19. Yuon, "Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation," 228.
20. Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," 1852, *Marxists Internet Archive*, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1852/18th-brumaire/ch07.htm>.
21. Yuon, "Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation," 81, 145.
22. Karl Marx, "Letter from Marx to Editor of the *Otecestvenniye Zapisky*," 1877, *Marxists Internet Archive*, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1877/11/russia.htm>.
23. Karl Marx, "Marx-Zasulich Correspondence: The 'Second' Draft," February/March 1881, *Marxists Internet Archive*, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1881/zasulich/draft-2.htm>.
24. Alan Kimball, "The First International and the Russian Obshchina," *Slavic Review* 32, no. 3 (September 1973): 491; and Friedrich Engels, "Afterword," in *Marx and Engels: Collected Works*, ed. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 27:491. On *Narodism* (Russian Populism) and *mirs*, see Alexander Trapeznik, "VM Chernov, Marxism, and the Agrarian Question," *New Zealand Slavonic Journal* (1997): 44–45. On *mirs* as substitutes for factories, self-reliance, and collective anarchism, see Neil Harding, *Lenin's Political Thought: Theory and Practice in the Democratic and Socialist Revolutions* (Chicago: Haymarket, 2009), 34, 107; and Alan Kimball, "The Russian Past and the Socialist Future in the Thought of Peter Lavrov," *Slavic Review: The American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies* 30, no. 1 (1971): 29. As the Russian Revolution proceeded, the question was the relationship between industry and

agriculture rather than between rural and urban: How would one manage agriculture in the industrialization process? Lenin disagreed with his peers over the direction of change in the Russian agricultural sector (capitalism versus “vertical integration” from production to sale) and broke from Marx in stressing the vanguard’s role, effectively overturning the dialectics of Marx’s understanding of revolution. Philip C. C. Huang, Gao Yuan, and Yusheng Peng, “Capitalization without Proletarianization in China’s Agricultural Development,” *Modern China* 38, no. 2 (March 2012): 140.

25. Sher, “Le parcours politique des Khmers Rouges,” 72, 83–85; and Kiernan, “Wild Chickens, Farm Chickens, and Cormorants,” in Chandler and Kiernan, *Revolution and Its Aftermath in Kampuchea*, 178–179.

26. Samir Amin, *Imperialism and Unequal Development* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977), 109.

27. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, trans. Samuel Moore (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1964), 65.

28. Brocheux and Hemery, *Indochina*, 285.

29. Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 23–25.

30. Amin, “Les effets structurels de l’intégration internationale des économies pré-capitalistes,” 1–9, 139–141, 484–485.

31. Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 192–193.

32. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1970), 68–69.

33. Amin, “Les effets structurels de l’intégration internationale des économies pré-capitalistes,” 1–9.

34. Oscar J. Hammen, “Marx and the Agrarian Question,” *American Historical Review* 77, no. 3 (June 1977): 684, quoting Marx, “Die Klassenkämpfe in Frankreich 1848 bis 1850,” in *Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels: Werke*, ed. Institut für Marxismus-Leninismus beim Zentralkomitee der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1960), 7:83–84.

35. Association des Étudiants Khmères (AEK), “Feuillet d’Information” [Information sheet], in Leng Soraang, letter to Leng Ngeth, “Activités Anti-Royales de l’Association des Étudiants Khmers en France” [Anti-Royalist activities of the AEK in France], Aix-en-Provence, 8 February 1953, 7, ANOM INDO HCI SPCE 110.

36. Mao Zedong, “On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People,” 21 February 1957, in MacFarquhar, Cheek, and Wu, *Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao*, 131–190.

37. Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 192–193.

38. Remy Prud’homme, *L’économie du Cambodge* [The Cambodian economy] (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969), 75; and Zhou Deshou, “Jianpuzhai wangguo jingji jianshe qingkuang” [The Kingdom of Cambodia’s economic development], *Dong-nanya yanjiu ziliao* [Southeast Asia Studies (China)] 2 (1964): 43–44.

39. Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 210; and Becker, *When the War Was Over*, 78–79.

40. Heder, *Cambodian Communism and the Vietnamese Model*, 1:74.

41. Jean Delvert, *Le paysan cambodgien* [The Cambodian peasant] (Paris: Mouton, 1961), 509.

42. Willmott, “Analytical Errors of the Kampuchean Communist Party,” 224.

43. May Ebihara, “Revolution and Reformulation in Kampuchean Village Culture,” in *The Cambodia Agony*, ed. David Ablin and Marlowe Hood (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1990), 17; and May Ebihara, “Svay, a Khmer Village in Cambodia” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1968), 196.

44. Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 57. In Sobay, socioeconomic categories “did not exist” in 1960, though metrics of differentiation such as “those who have” (*neak mean*), “those who have enough” (*neak kuorsâm*), the poor (*neak krâ*), and the super impoverished (*neak toal / neak toal krâ*) did. May Ebihara “‘Beyond Suffering’: The Recent History of a Cambodian Village,” in *The Challenge of Reform in Indochina*, ed. Börje Ljunggren (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Institute for International Development, 1993), 161.

45. Frieson, “Political Nature of Democratic Kampuchea,” 424; and Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 20.

46. On CPK democratic centralism, see James Tyner, *From Killing Fields to Rice Fields: Nature, Life, and Labor under the Khmer Rouge* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2017), 75–82.

47. Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 190–193.

48. Marx and Engels, *German Ideology*, 61.

49. Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 139.

50. Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 228.

51. My thanks to Marc Opper for bringing this Mao quote to my attention.

52. Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 4.

53. Mao Zedong, “Two Talks on Mutual Aid and Cooperation in Agriculture,” October/November 1953, *Marxists Internet Archive*, https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-5/mswv5_36.htm.

54. Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 253.

55. Willmott, “Analytical Errors of the Kampuchean Communist Party,” 210.

56. Hammen, “Marx and the Agrarian Question,” 681–682, 702.

57. Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 150–151.

58. Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 150–159.

59. Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 250.

60. Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 252.

61. Gunn makes the same observation in *Monarchical Manipulation in Cambodia*, 134–135.

62. Karl Marx, “Inaugural Address of the International Working Men’s Association: ‘The First International,’” 1864, *Marxists Internet Archive*, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1864/10/27.htm>.

63. Li Huaiyin, *Village China under Socialism and Reform: A Micro-history, 1948–2008* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), 23–25. Subsequent stages included “primary cooperatives” (*chujishe*) and “advanced cooperatives” (*gaojishe*).

64. Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 249–250, 253.

65. Mosyakov, “Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese Communists,” in Cook, *Genocide in Cambodia and Rwanda*, 51, citing “Subversive Activities of Chinese in Cambodia,” 19 February 1968, Russian State Archives of Modern History (RSAMH), fund 5, inventory 60, file 36, 4.

66. Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 279.

67. Andrew Hardy, “The Economics of French Rule in Indochina: A Biography of Paul Bernard (1892–1960),” *Modern Asian Studies* 32, no. 4 (October 1998): 817.

68. Paul Bernard, *Les problèmes posés par le développement industriel de l’Indochine, rapport sur l’Indochine et le problème d’industrialisation, et réponses, Assemblée plénière* (25. I. 1938) [The problems of Indochina’s industrial development: Report on Indochina, the problems of industrialization and answers: Plenary Assembly (25 January 1938) (Paris: A. Tournon, 1938), 15.

69. Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 273, 276.

70. Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 274–276.

71. Sher, *Le Kampuchéa des “Khmers Rouges,”* 207.

72. Kiernan and Boua, *Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea*, 134–137.

73. Kiernan and Boua, *Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea*, 139–147.

74. Mao Zedong, “Get Organized!,” 29 November 1943, *Marxists Internet Archive*, https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-3/mswv3_17.htm.

75. Yuon, “Le paysannerie du Cambodge et ses projets de modernisation,” 156.

76. Heder, *Cambodian Communism and the Vietnamese Model*, 1:59; and Sikœun, *Itinéraire d’un Intellectuel Khmer Rouge*, 179.

77. Nim, “Camlœy Hu Nim hau Phoas Krasouñ Ghosnākār aṃbi Pravatti Paks Se Aī Aā,” 1–3.

78. Sikœun, *Itinéraire d’un Intellectuel Khmer Rouge*, 452.

79. Nim, “Camlœy Hu Nim hau Phoas Krasouñ Ghosnākār aṃbi Pravatti Paks Se Aī Aā,” 3.

80. Sikœun, *Itinéraire d’un Intellectuel Khmer Rouge*, 452; and Harris, *Buddhism in a Dark Age*, 39–40.

81. Osborne, *Sihanouk*, 159.

82. Nim, “Camlœy Hu Nim hau Phoas Krasouñ Ghosnākār aṃbi Pravatti Paks Se Aī Aā,” 9.

83. Nim, “Planning the Past,” in Chandler, Kiernan, and Boua, *Pol Pot Plans the Future*, 242.

84. “Premier Chou on Sino-Cambodian Friendship,” *Peking Review*, 22 October 1965, 15.

85. Kiernan, “The Samlaut Rebellion,” in Kiernan and Boua, *Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea*, 181. See also Zhang, *Xihanuke jiazu*, 161.

86. Timothy M. Carney, “Biographical Sketches,” in Carney, *Communist Party Power in Kampuchea*, 64.

87. Chhay, “Seckti rāykār(ṇ) jūn Angkarpaks,” 15 March 1977, 5–6. Yuon was first secretary general-adjunct in May 1961, whereas Nim was councillor. “La naissance de l’Association D’amitié Khméro-Chinoise” [The birth of the Khmer-Chinese Friendship Association], in Ministère de l’Information, “Revue trimestrielle de l’Association d’amitié khméro-chinoise” [Quarterly Review of the Khmer-Chinese Friendship Association], no. 1 (January 1965): 15.

88. Nim, “Planning the Past,” 241.

89. Etcheson, *Rise and Demise of Democratic Kampuchea*, 51.

90. The Pracheachon was a legal front for the KPRP, the CPK’s forerunner organization. Mosyakov, “Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese Communists,” in Cook, *Genocide*

in *Cambodia and Rwanda*, 3. At this stage, Nim supported “the Honorable Sihanouk” for his “active neutrality.” Nim, “Les services publics économiques au Cambodge,” 385.

91. Charles H. Twining, “The Economy,” in Jackson, *Cambodia 1975–1978*, 113.

92. Timothy M. Carney, “Continuity in Cambodian Communism,” in Carney, *Communist Party Power in Kampuchea*, 14–15.

93. Shawcross, *Sideshow*, 242, 246.

94. Nim, “Les services publics économiques au Cambodge,” 410. He cites Mao Tsé-toung [Mao Zedong], “Sur le problème de la coopération agricole” [On the cooperative transformation of agriculture, 31 July 1955 (Beijing: Editions en langues étrangères, 1956); and Li Fuchun, “Rapport sur le Premier Plan quinquennal pur le développement de l’économie nationale de la République Populaire de Chine” [Report on the first five-year plan for development of the national economy of the People’s Republic of China in 1953–1957, 5–6 July 1955 (Beijing: Editions en langues étrangères, 1956).

95. Nim, “Les services publics économiques au Cambodge,” 92–93.

96. Nim, “Les services publics économiques au Cambodge,” 51–54.

97. Nim, “Les services publics économiques au Cambodge,” 46, 48.

98. Nim, “Les services publics économiques au Cambodge,” 46–66.

99. Nim, “Les services publics économiques au Cambodge,” 69–86, 88.

100. Nim, “Les services publics économiques au Cambodge,” 96–98.

101. Nim, “Les services publics économiques au Cambodge,” 83–89, 95.

102. Nim, “Les services publics économiques au Cambodge,” 92, 100, 296.

103. Mao Zedong, “On New Democracy,” 1940, in MRP, 7:351.

104. Quoted in Mao Zedong, “On New Democracy,” 1940, in MRP, 7:331. Mao quotes Karl Marx’s “Preface” to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. See Karl Marx, “A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy: Part One Preface,” in *Marx Today: Selected Works and Recent Debates*, ed. John F. Sitton. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 92.

105. Nim, “Les services publics économiques au Cambodge,” 386–388.

106. Nim, “Camlœy Hu Nim hau Phoas Krasouñ Ghosnākār am̐bi Pravatti Paks Se Aī Aā,” 11.

107. Etcheson, *Rise and Demise of Democratic Kampuchea*, 51.

5. Like Desiccated Straw in the Rice Fields

1. Michael Vickery, “Looking Back at Cambodia, 1942–76,” in Kiernan and Boua, *Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea*, 96–99; and Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 8.

2. Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 123.

3. Mission du Front Uni National du Kampuchea (FUNK), “Bulletin d’Information” [Information bulletin], 11 August 1972.

4. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 113, 118, 192–193; and Short, *Pol Pot*, 107–108.

5. Martin, *Cambodia*, 107, 163. See also Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 177.

6. Short, *Pol Pot*, 129.

7. Osborne, *Sihanouk*, 102. On his China trips, see Norodom Sihanouk, “‘Pour nous, Cambodgiens, la Chine est bien notre amie numéro un . . .’ Déclaration de Samdech Chef de l’Etat à son départ de Pékin au terme de sa Vème Visite à la République Populaire de China, le 6 Octobre 1964” [“For Cambodians, China is our number one

friend . . .” Declaration of the head of state on the occasion of his departure from Beijing after his fifth visit to the People’s Republic of China, 6 October 1964], in Ministère de l’Information, “Revue trimestrielle de l’Association d’amitié khméro-chinoise,” 8.

8. Osborne, *Sihanouk*, 102–103.

9. Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 55; Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 181, 204; and Nim, “Camlœy Hu Nim hau Phoas Krasouñ Ghosnākār am̐bi Pravatti Paks Se Aī Aā,” 14. Sihanouk wrote *Notre socialisme bouddhique* [Our Buddhist socialism] (Phnom Penh: Ministère de l’information, 1965).

10. Short, *Pol Pot*, 129. Yuon held many different posts during his tenure as a public servant.

11. Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 216.

12. Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 204–206.

13. Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 55–57.

14. Hou Yuon, “Solving Rural Problems,” in Kiernan and Boua, *Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea*, 134–135.

15. Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 232–233; and Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 154.

16. Norodom Sihanouk, *L’Indochine vue de Pékin: Entretiens avec Jean Lacouture* [Indochina as seen from Beijing: Interviews with Jean Lacouture] (Paris: Editions du seuil, 1972), 90.

17. Nim, “Camlœy Hu Nim hau Phoas Krasouñ Ghosnākār am̐bi Pravatti Paks Se Aī Aā,” 5–9.

18. Quoted in Timothy M. Carney, “Biographical Sketches,” in Carney, *Communist Party Power in Kampuchea*, 64.

19. Chieu, *Wo yu Zhonggong he Jiangong chise huaren jiemi*, 45.

20. Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 83.

21. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 169.

22. Richardson, *China, Cambodia, and the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence*, 64. On Sihanouk’s pro-China stance, see Sihanouk, “Comment nous voyons la Chine,” 7, NAC, box 689, ID6061.

23. Ying Bing and Shi Zeliang, “Jianpuzhai xiandai shilue” [Modern history of Cambodia], *Dongnanya yanjiu ziliao* [Southeast Asian Studies (China)] 1 (1983): 106.

24. “Premier Chou on Sino-Cambodian Friendship.”

25. Ying Bing and Shi Zeliang, “Jianpuzhai xiandai shilue” [Modern history of Cambodia]. *Dongnanya yanjiu ziliao* [Southeast Asian Studies] 1 (1983): 106; and Zhang, *Xihanuke jiazou*, 161. See also Carney, “Biographical Sketches,” 64. Sihanouk blamed the rise of radicalism on China. Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 170.

26. Um, *From the Land of Shadows*, 93.

27. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 142–144, 160.

28. Ben Kiernan, “The Samlaut Rebellion, 1967,” in Kiernan and Boua, *Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea*, 181. See also Zhang, *Xihanuke jiazou*, 161.

29. Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 204–205.

30. Nim, “Camlœy Hu Nim hau Phoas Krasouñ Ghosnākār am̐bi Pravatti Paks Se Aī Aā,” 18; Carney, “Biographical Sketches,” 64; Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 167; and Sikœun, *Itinéraire d’un Intellectuel Khmer Rouge*, 40.

31. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 166–167.

32. Quoted in Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 264.

33. Quoted in Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 264.
34. Nim, “Camlœy Hu Nim hau Phoas Krasouñ Ghosnākār am̐bi Pravatti Paks Se Aī Aā,” 16.
35. Henri Locard, *Pol Pot’s Little Red Book: The Sayings of Angkar* (Chiang Mai, Thailand: Silkworm Books, 2005), 68, 73.
36. Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 123; Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 43, 46–54; and Short, *Pol Pot*, 104–122. On Pol Pot’s recollection of these events, see Pol Pot, “Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot,” 16.
37. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 112; and Pol Pot, “Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot,” 17–18.
38. Chandler, “Revising the Past in Democratic Kampuchea,” 288–300.
39. Ministère des Affaires Étrangères du Kampuchéa Démocratique, *Livre Noir: Faits et Preuves des Actes d’Agression et d’Annexion du Vietnam Contre le Kampuchéa* [Black paper: Facts and evidences of the acts of aggression and annexation of Vietnam against Kampuchea] (Phnom Penh: Département de la Presse et l’information du Ministre des affaires, étrangères, 1978), 36. On Samphan’s arrest, see Pol Pot, “Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot,” 18.
40. Pol Pot, “Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot,” 17–19.
41. Anonymous, *Pravattisāstr Saṅkhep nai Paks Paṭivatt(n) Kampuchea* [A brief history of the Khmer People’s Revolutionary Party (Phnom Penh: n.p., 1984), 6; To Kuyen, “The KPRP as Avant-Garde of the Kampuchean People,” *Cong Shang* [Vietnam], 1983, N11–12; and Ben Kiernan, “Pol Pot and the Kampuchean Communist Movement,” in Kiernan and Boua, *Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea*, 253.
42. Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 193–194; and Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 60–61.
43. Carney, “Biographical Sketches,” 62.
44. Tyner, *Killing of Cambodia*, 64.
45. Ben Kiernan and Donald Kirk regard the Samlaut Rebellion as the first salvo of the Cambodian Communist movement. Kiernan, “Samlaut Rebellion, 1967–1968,” 166; and Donald Kirk, *Wider War: The Struggle for Cambodia, Thailand, and Laos* (New York: Praeger, 1971), 78. Sihanouk blamed the Communists for the disturbances. Tyner, *Killing of Cambodia*, 66. See Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 166; and Milton Osborne, *Sihanouk*, 191 for contrarian viewpoints.
46. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian history*, 125, 166.
47. Kiernan, “Samlaut Rebellion, 1967–1968,” 166–195; and Tyner, *Killing of Cambodia*, 66–68.
48. Pol Pot, “Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot,” 38–39.
49. Kiernan, “Pol Pot and the Kampuchean Communist Movement,” in Kiernan and Boua, *Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea*, 255.
50. British Broadcasting Corporation *Summary of World Broadcasts* (BBC SWB), 5 October 1977, FE/5632/C/3.
51. On covert US missions in Cambodia, see Tyner, *Killing of Cambodia*, 69; and Kenton Clymer, *Troubled Relations: The United States and Cambodia since 1870* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2007).
52. Pol Pot, “Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot,” 30–31.
53. Sary, “Cambodia 1972,” 16–17. On how the CCP mobilized Chinese peasants to fight against the Japanese, see Chen Yung-fa, *Making Revolution: The Communist Move-*

ment in Eastern and Central China, 1937–1945 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); and Oppen, *People's Wars in China*.

54. Pol Pot, "Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot," 70–71.

55. Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 72–73.

56. Serge Thion, "Journal de marche dans le maquis," in Thion and Kernan, *Khmers Rouges*, 43–97.

57. FBIS, "Aki Stresses Workers' 'Vanguard Role' in Struggle History," *Daily Report*, FRB-71-086 (4 May 1971): H1.

58. Ith Sarin, "Nine Months in the Maquis, US Embassy, Phnom Penh trans.," in Carney, *Communist Party Power in Kampuchea*, 34. Ith Sarin was "the most prominent and articulate voice that denounced the cruelty and barbarity of the [CPK] even before they seized power in the cities." Henri Locard, personal communication to author, 1 November 2020.

59. Alexander Hinton, "Oppression and Vengeance in the Cambodian Genocide," in *Genocide by the Oppressed: Subaltern Genocide in Theory and Practice*, ed. Nicholas A. Robins and Adam Jones (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 87. Hinton refers to this strategy as "seepage" (*karchreap*).

60. Sarin, "Nine Months in the Maquis," 51.

61. Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 231–232.

62. Quoted in Carney, *Communist Party Power in Kampuchea*, 31.

63. Charles Keyes, "Communist Revolution and the Buddhist Past in Cambodia," in *Asian Visions of Authority: Religion and the Modern States of East and Southeast Asia*, ed. Charles Keyes, Laurel Kendall, and Helen Hardacre (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), 57.

64. Sary, "Cambodia 1972," 13–14.

65. Kiernan, *Pol Pot Regime*, 36–37.

66. Ith Sarin, *Sranoh Praliñ Khmer* [Regrets for the Khmer soul] (Phnom Penh: n.p., 1973), 56. Only in September 1977 did the *Angkar* announce Marxism-Leninism publicly as its ideology. Pol Pot, "Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot," 16.

67. Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 126–127.

68. Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 127.

69. Locard, *Pol Pot's Little Red Book*, 107–108.

70. Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 131. See also Locard, *Pol Pot's Little Red Book*. On the CPK takeover and aftermath in Phnom Penh, so described as a "ghost town" (*sicheng*) by underground CCP spy Ng Xibeng (a.k.a. Tie Ge), see Tie, *Zhulang Meihe*, 648–673.

71. Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, xviii.

72. Kanavou and Path, "Lingering Effects of Thought Reform," 91–92. See also Harris, *Buddhism in a Dark Age*, 43–63.

73. Locard, *Pol Pot's Little Red Book*, 92, 171. See also Harris, *Buddhism in a Dark Age*, 44–45.

74. Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 72–95; and Eve Zucker, *Forest of Struggle: Moralities of Remembrance in Upland Cambodia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2013), 100–102.

75. Locard, *Pol Pot's Little Red Book*, 203.

76. Frank Smith, *Interpretive Accounts of the Khmer Rouge Years: Personal Experiences in Cambodian Peasant World View* (Madison: University of Wisconsin-Madison, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 1989), 30.

77. Keyes, “Communist Revolution and the Buddhist Past in Cambodia,” 55–58.
78. Kanavou and Path, “Lingering Effects of Thought Reform,” 92; and Robert Jay Lifton, *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism: A Study of “Brainwashing” in China* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 425.
79. Sary, “Cambodia 1972,” 10.
80. Tyner, *Killing of Cambodia*, 154.
81. Sak Sutsakhan, *The Khmer Republic at War and the Final Collapse* (Washington, DC: United States Army Center of Military History, 1987), 32; and Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 128.
82. Mosyakov, “Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese Communists,” in Cook, *Genocide in Cambodia and Rwanda*, 54–55.
83. Pol Pot, “Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot,” 36–46.
84. Mosyakov, “Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese Communists,” 63.
85. See Pol Pot, “Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot,” 1–77 passim.
86. Wang, “Chinese Communist Party’s Relationship with the Khmer Rouge in the 1970s,” 9–10; and Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 84.
87. Shawcross, *Sideshow*, 125.
88. Osborne, *Sihanouk*, 219.
89. Jean-Marie Cambacérès, *Norodom Sihanouk, le Roi Insubmersible* [Norodom Sihanouk: The unsinkable king] (Paris: Le cherche midi, 2013), 185. A 1973 special issue of *Renmin huabao* [China Pictorial] documented Sihanouk’s inspection tour of the GRUNK. “Xihanuke qinwang shicha Jianpuzhai jiefangqu” [Samdech Sihanouk’s Inspection Tour of the Cambodian Liberated Zone] *Renmin huabao* [China Pictorial] no. 6 (1973).
90. Personal communication with Theara Thun, 27 July 2017. See also Richardson, *China, Cambodia, and the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence*, 66–73; and Nhem Boraden, “The Cambodian Civil War and the Vietnam War: A Tale of Two Revolutionary Wars” (PhD diss., University of Delaware, 2015), 172–173.
91. “Cambodians Designate Sihanouk as Chief for Life,” *New York Times*, 26 April 1975, 8.
92. Quoted in Huy Vannak, *The Khmer Rouge Division 703: From Victory to Total Destruction* (Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia, 2003), 15–16.
93. Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 335.
94. Vannak, *The Khmer Rouge Division 703*, 14–15.
95. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 130.
96. “Sĕyvbhau kāmṇat’ hetu robā Heng Sai Nĕoeun lokkhanthikah Sambandh Yuvajan [Notebook of Heng Sĕnceurn: Statute of the Youth Association], DCCAM, No. D21854.
97. Vannak, *Khmer Rouge Division 703*, 14–15.
98. “Pravatrūp ropā Suos Thy” [Revolutionary history of Suos Thy], Tuol Sleng Prison, 6 June 1977, DCCAM, No. D00478.
99. “Seckti thlaenkār(ṇ) rabas’ Khieu Samphan, Hu Nim, niñ Hou Yuon” [Communiqué of Khieu Samphan, Hou Yuon, and Hu Nim], 19, DCCAM, No. D21471.
100. Hou Yuon, “A Statement by Hou Yuon on 20 September 1974 on the 23rd Anniversary of the Fighting in Amlaig District,” trans. Sophal Ly, *Searching for the Truth* 25 (2002): 5.
101. Kiernan, *Pol Pot Regime*, 167. See also “Kāmṇat’hetu aṃbī dassanakicc acinrai(y) niñ secktirāykār(ṇ) aṃbī sabhābkār(ṇ)ruom mūlthān” [Memorandum on

the trip of the CPK Standing Committee to the Northwest], 20–24 August 1975, DCCAM, No. L01022.

6. “We Must Combine Theory and Practice”

1. “Zai Zhonggong zhongyang, guowuyuan juxingde huanying yanhui shang, Bo’er Bute shuji jianghua” [Secretary Pol Pot gives a speech at the welcoming banquet held by the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee and the State Council], RMRB, 29 September 1977.

2. Jowitt, *New World Disorder*, 16.

3. “Report of Activities of the Party Center According to the General Political Tasks of 1976,” trans. David Chandler, in Chandler, Kiernan, and Boua, *Pol Pot Plans the Future*, 182–212. See also Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 60.

4. “The Party’s Four-Year Plan to Build Socialism in All Fields, 1977–1980,” Party Center, July–August 1976, trans. Chanthou Boua, in Chandler, Kiernan, and Boua, *Pol Pot Plans the Future*, 49 (hereafter “Four-Year Plan”).

5. Alexander Hinton, *Man or Monster? The Trial of a Khmer Rouge Torturer* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), 114; and Ben Kiernan, “Pol Pot and the Kampuchean Communist Movement,” in Kiernan and Boua, *Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea*, 228.

6. Matthew Galway, “From Revolutionary Culture to Original Culture and Back: ‘On New Democracy’ and the Kampucheanization of Marxism-Leninism, 1940–1965,” *Cross Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review*, no. 24 (September 2017): 132–158.

7. Kiernan, *Pol Pot Regime*, 33. On Polpotism’s features, see Kiernan, “Myth, Nationalism, and Genocide,” 192–196.

8. Pol Pot, “Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot,” 33.

9. Timothy M. Carney, “Continuity in Cambodian Communism,” in Carney, *Communist Party Power in Kampuchea*, 8.

10. Sarin, *Srañoh Praliñ Khmer*, 62, 73. On the Alliance of Communist Youth of Kampuchea (Sambōndh Yuvajan Kummuyñist Kampuchea), see “Paks Kummuyñist Kampuchea niñ pañhā niñ Yuvajan Yuvanārī Paṭivatt Kampuchea” [The Communist Party of Kampuchea and the problem of Kampuchean Youth], *Yuvajan Yuvanārī Paṭivatt* [Revolutionary Youth], no. 2 (August–September 1973), 19, DCCAM, No. D00092.

11. *Yuvajan Yuvanārī Paṭivatt* [Revolutionary Youth (Cambodia)], nos. 7–8 (July–August 1977), 6, DCCAM, No. D21402.

12. Carney, “Continuity in Cambodian Communism,” in Carney, *Communist Party Power in Kampuchea*, 8, quoting *Le Monde* [The World (France)], 15 January 1972.

13. David P. Chandler, “A Revolution in Full Spate,” in Ablin and Hood, *Cambodian Agony*, 177, 179n10.

14. Carney, “Continuity in Cambodian Communism,” in Carney, *Communist Party Power in Kampuchea*, 8. Orders flowed from the Central Committee to the zones (*phumipheak*), then regions (*tampan*) districts (*sruk*), communes (*ghum*), and, finally, hamlets (*bhumi*).

15. Kiernan, “Pol Pot and the Kampuchean Communist Movement,” in Kiernan and Boua, *Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea*, 228–229; and Etcheson, *Rise and Demise of Democratic Kampuchea*, 164. Marginal factions included former *Khmer Issarak* and Pracheachon members and pro-Sihanouk, pro-Vietnamese affiliates.

16. Laurence Picq, *Beyond the Horizon: Five Years with the Khmer Rouge* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 45; and Mertha, *Brothers in Arms*, 23.

17. Kiernan, *Pol Pot Regime*, 55–59.

18. Chandler, "Revising the Past in Democratic Kampuchea," 288–300.

19. On the Gang of Four, see Tang Tsou, *The Cultural Revolution and Post-Mao Reforms: A Historical Perspective* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 120–129.

20. On familial ties and ideology in Maoist China, see Wernheuer, *Social History of Maoist China*, 128–131, 210–213. On family origins and "good" class backgrounds, see Joel Andreas, "Battling over Political and Cultural Power during the Chinese Cultural Revolution," *Theory and Society* 31, no. 4 (August 2002): 463–519. Upon request during an April 1974 meeting, Ieng Sary received Chinese-printed Cambodian notes that made their way to the CPK liberated zones in November and circulated in international trade. Wang, "Chinese Communist Party's Relationship with the Khmer Rouge in the 1970s," 18–19; Huang Qun, *Liushinian Zhong-Yue guanxi Zhijianzheng*, 104–105; and Xu Ran, "Boer Bute ji Hongse Gaomiande lishibeiju" [The historical tragedy of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge], *Jizhe Guancha* [Reporters' Notes (China)], no. 3 (2000): 38–42.

21. "Zhongzhi jiguan taolun lishi jueyi (caoan) jianbao" [Summary of the discussion on the resolution on Party history in the organs directly under the Party Center [draft]], Unpublished document. Fairbank Collection, Fung Library, Harvard University. As quoted in Wang, "Chinese Communist Party's Relationship with the Khmer Rouge in the 1970s," 24.

22. The CPK's clandestinity and destruction of its records make knowing the cause nearly impossible, but it could be both reasons.

23. Bun Chanmol, *Carit Khmer* [Cambodian character] (Phnom Penh: Kehadtan 79, 1973), quoted in Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 116.

24. Hu Nim, "Planning the Past: The Forced Confessions of Hu Nim, Tuol Sleng Prison, May–June 1977," in Chandler, Kiernan, and Boua, *Pol Pot Plans the Future*, 276.

25. *Dañ' Pativatt* (September–October 1976): 27. DCCAM, No. D21757

26. Kiernan, *Pol Pot Regime*, 33.

27. Etcheson, *Rise and Demise of Democratic Kampuchea*, 177. On Pol Pot's rank, see Democratic Kampuchea, "Biography of Pol Pot, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kampuchea" (Phnom Penh: September 1978), 5. On Nuon Chea's role in disseminating propaganda, see Kiernan, *Pol Pot Regime*, 58.

28. Mertha, *Brothers in Arms*, 23.

29. Samphan, *L'histoire récente du Cambodge et mes prises de position*, 69–70. Pol Pot said the same in "Interview du camarade Pol Pot, Secrétaire du Comité Central du Parti Communiste du Kampuchéa, Premier ministre de gouvernement du Kampuchéa Démocratique a la délégation des journalistes yougoslaves en visite au Kampuchéa Démocratique, 17 March 1978" [Interview of comrade Pol Pot, Communist Party of Kampuchea Central Committee secretary, prime minister of the Government of Democratic Kampuchea, to a delegation of Yugoslav journalists visiting Democratic Kampuchea, 17 March 1978], 17 March 1978, Department of Press and Information of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Democratic Kampuchea, Phnom Penh, 9–14. On village cooperatives, see Kiernan, *Pol Pot Regime*, 58–59.

30. David Chandler, *A History of Cambodia*, 2nd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992), 256–257.

31. “Meeting Minutes of the Standing Committee of the Communist Party of Kampuchea,” 9 October 1975, DCCAM, No. D00677.

32. Locard, *Pol Pot’s Little Red Book*, 11. On CPK instructions to “smash internal enemies”—Chams, Vietnamese, capitalists, former Lon Nol workers, intellectuals, CIA agents, former soldiers, teachers, doctors, and civil servants from the old regime—see Joan Criddle and Teeda Mam, *To Destroy You Is No Loss: The Odyssey of a Cambodian Family* (New York: Doubleday, 1987), 153–154.

33. “Meeting Minutes.”

34. Chandler, “Revising the Past in Democratic Kampuchea,” 296.

35. Samphan, *L’histoire récente du Cambodge et mes prises de position*, 77–79.

36. Chandler, “Revising the Past in Democratic Kampuchea,” 290.

37. Pol Pot, “Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot,” 12–14. See also *Dañ’ Paṭivatt* [Revolutionary Flag] (September–October 1976), special issue, 4. DCCAM, No. D21418.

38. Pol Pot, “Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot,” 5.

39. Kiernan, “Pol Pot and the Kampuchean Communist Movement,” in Kiernan and Boua, *Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea*, 232; and Nuon Chea, “Statement of the Communist Party of Kampuchea to the Communist Workers’ Party of Denmark,” July 1978, 52, *Marxists Internet Archive*, <https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/denmark/kr.pdf>.

40. Chandler, “Revolution in Full Spate,” in Ablin and Hood, *Cambodian Agony*, 168–169. See also Kiernan, *Pol Pot Regime*, 425.

41. Howard DeNike, John Quigley, and Kenneth Robinson, eds., *Genocide in Cambodia: Documents from the Trial of Pol Pot and Ieng Sary* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 545.

42. Kiernan, *Pol Pot Regime*, xxix, 315; and Michelle Caswell, *Archiving the Unspeakable: Silence, Memory, and the Photographic Record in Cambodia* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2014), 8–9. *Santibāl* is a portmanteau for security (*santisukh*) and police (*nogorbāl*). On S-21 and Duch, see Hinton, *Man or Monster?*

43. Picq, *Beyond the Horizon*, 97–98. Also in Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 147.

44. Daniel Bultmann, *Inside Cambodian Insurgency: A Sociological Perspective on Civil Wars and Conflict* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015), 118; and Hun Sen, “Knuñ sabhābkar(ñ) paccuppanneḥ trūvghoeñ oy cpās’ nūvsati āramm(ñ) puggalniyam hoey ptejñā vāy kamdec oy dān’belvelā” [In the present situation, try to see through and get rid of individualism], *Dañ’ Paṭivatt* [Revolutionary Flag] 5 (1 May 1973), DCCAM, No. D00079.

45. Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 227. See also Gina Chon and Sambath Thet, *Behind the Killing Fields: A Khmer Rouge Leader and One of His Victims* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 15.

46. Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 148.

47. Pin Yathay, *Stay Alive, My Son: A Real Tragedy in the Khmer Rouge Regime* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), 100.

48. Hinton, *Man or Monster?*, 104; and Kiernan, *Pol Pot Regime*, 336.

49. Robert Jay Lifton, *Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide* (London: Basic Books, 1988), 46.

50. *Dañ’ Paṭivatt* 7 (July 1978): 2, DCCAM, No. D17470.

51. Locard, *Pol Pot’s Little Red Book*, 211.

52. On punishment and spectacle, see Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Modern Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon, 1977), 25, 34–35.

53. Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 34. A former secretary at the French embassy, Denise Alfonso, described an incident that she witnessed during which a cadre named Ta Sok used a large knife to cut out a captive's liver, cook it on a little stove that his fellow cadre Ta Chea heated up, and eat it "hungrily." Quoted in DeNike, Quigley, and Robinson, *Genocide in Cambodia*, 25. Hinton identifies the victim as Touch, a man the governing cadres originally considered "a member of their community," but after the cadres caught Touch stealing cassava roots, Ta Sok cut out Touch's liver, divided it among his comrades, and ate it. On CPK liver eating, see Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 60–61, 77–78, 167–168, 276–296.

54. "Report on Activities of the Party Center According to the General Political Tasks of 1976," 182–186. See also Kiernan, *Pol Pot Regime*, 336.

55. *Dañ' Paṭivatt* [Revolutionary Flag] (September–October 1976), DCCAM, No. D21757.

56. Chandler, "Revising the Past in Democratic Kampuchea," 295.

57. Kiernan, *Blood and Soil*, 551.

58. Um, *From the Land of Shadows*, 280n53.

59. Chandler, "Revolution in Full Spate," in Ablin and Hood, *Cambodian Agony*, 168; and Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 62.

60. Pol Pot "Interview du camarade Pol Pot," 9–10.

61. Kiernan, *Pol Pot Regime*, 32–33n10.

62. Kiernan, *Pol Pot Regime*, 61n125.

63. Jean Lacouture, *Survive le peuple cambodgien!* [Survive, people of Cambodia!] (Paris: Seuil, 1978), 117.

64. Kiernan, *Pol Pot Regime*, 61n124.

65. Henri Locard, personal communication to author, 1 November 2020. Locard also notes that this was why the CPK barred Yuon from entering Phnom Penh after 17 April 1975.

66. Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao's China*, 219.

67. Luo Ruiqing, "Guanyu jiunian douzheng zongjiede jige wenti" [Some questions on how to summarize nine years of struggle], *Renmin Gongan* [People's Public Security] 15 (1958): 7, quoted in Michael Schoenhals, "Nebulous Nexus: Modernity and Perilustration in Maoist China," in *Mass Dictatorship and Modernity*, ed. Michael Kim, Michael Schoenhals, and Yong-Woo Kim (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 65.

68. Mao Zedong, "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People," 27 February 1957, in MacFarquhar, Cheek, and Wu, *Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao*, 164–165.

69. Locard, *Pol Pot's Little Red Book*, 77.

70. Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 43–44, quoting *Dañ' Paṭivatt* (December 1975–January 1976): 41.

71. Pol Pot, "Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot," 59. *Dañ' Paṭivatt* also called for ridding all party members and cadres of "everything that is of the oppressor class, of private property, stance, view, sentiment, custom, culture that exists in ourselves, no matter how much or how little." Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 44, quoting "Sharpen the Consciousness of the Proletarian Class to Be as Keen and Strong as Pos-

sible,” *Dañ’ Paṭivatt* [Revolutionary Flag] (September–October 1976), special issue, 273. DCCAM, No. D21418.

72. On CPK anti-intellectual purges, see Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 60–68.

73. “Guanyu ruogan lishi wentide jueyi” [Resolution on certain questions in the history of the Chinese Communist Party], April 1945, *Communist Party of China—People’s Daily Online*, <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/33837/2534543.html>.

74. Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 174n3. Mao confessed that in the 1950–1952 *sufan* campaigns, the CCP had “killed 700,000,” reasoning that had they not been killed “the people would not have been able to raise their heads. . . . [They] demanded those killings [to] liberate their productive forces.” Mao Zedong, “On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People,” in MacFarquhar, Cheek, and Wu, *Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao*, 141–142.

75. Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 42–43. Pol Pot “probably referred to the milder, authorized version when he mentioned the speech in his eulogy on Mao,” citing FBIS, “Pol Pot Eulogy,” *Daily Report: Asia and Pacific* 76–183 (20 September 1976): H3–H6.

76. Pol Pot, “Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot,” 60–61. A 1978 issue of *Revolutionary Flag* (*Dañ’ Paṭivatt*) also called attention to suppressing counterrevolutionaries who hold up “the signboard (*plaque*) ‘Revolution’ temporarily, masquerade as revolutionaries, bore away, build-up their treasonous forces inside our revolutionary ranks and damage our revolution at a time when our revolution was not strong, hot or battlehardened, when it still took the form of a secret network or when it was cut off from the masses.” “Pay Attention to Sweeping out the Concealed Enemies,” *Dañ’ Paṭivatt* [Revolutionary Flag] (July 1978): 9–10, DCCAM, No. D17470; as quoted in Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 43.

77. Locard, *Pol Pot’s Little Red Book*, 76, 130.

78. Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 43.

79. MacFarquhar, Cheek, and Wu, *Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao*, 13.

80. Locard, *Pol Pot’s Little Red Book*, 74–75.

81. Yang, *Xihanuke Guowang*, 188–189.

82. Kiernan, “Pol Pot and the Kampuchean Communist Movement,” in Kiernan and Boua, *Peasants and Politics in Kampuchea*, 228.

83. Etcheson, *Rise and Demise of Democratic Kampuchea*, 211.

84. Jean-Louis Margolin, “Cambodge,” in Courtois, *Le Livre noir du communisme*, 627; and Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 245. On industrial development under Mao, see Stuart Schram, “Mao Zedong a Hundred Years on: The Legacy of a Ruler,” *China Quarterly*, no. 137 (March 1994): 125–143.

85. Locard, *Pol Pot’s Little Red Book*, 69.

86. Karl Jackson, “The Ideology of Total Revolution,” in Jackson, *Cambodia 1975–1978*, 244–245.

87. “Four-Year Plan,” 49.

88. Kiernan, *Pol Pot Regime*, 58.

89. CPK slogan: “The Super Great Leap Forward, this is a big leap beyond all reality” [*maha soat phlaoh maha haoh romlong*]. Locard, *Pol Pot’s Little Red Book*, 72.

90. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 246.

91. Samphan, *L’histoire récente du Cambodge et mes prises de position*, 75.

92. Ben Kiernan, “External and Indigenous Sources of Khmer Rouge Ideology,” in Westad and Quinn-Judge, *Third Indochina War*, 196–200.

93. Alexander Cook, “Third World Maoism,” in Cheek, *A Critical Introduction to Mao*, 302–303.

94. “Four-Year Plan,” 51–95. See tables 1–37 on these issues.

95. Pol Pot, “Interview du camarade Pol Pot,” 3.

96. *Dan’ Pativatt* (October–November 1977), special issue, 18–20. DCCAM, No. D21431.

97. Locard, *Pol Pot’s Little Red Book*, 74, 306.

98. FBIS, “Harvest to Yield ‘Great Surplus of Grain,’” *Daily Broadcasts*, AP 76–111 (8 June 1976): H2.

99. *Dan’ Pativatt* (December 1977–January 1978), special issue, 24. DCCAM, No. D21432. The party’s iron-fisted rule and surveillance of all workers mostly prevented a nationwide resistance to policies. On local resistance by Chams, see Ysa Osman, *The Cham Rebellion: Survivors’ Stories from the Villages* (Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia, Documentation Series 9, 2008).

100. “Four-Year Plan,” 97. See tables 50–56 on 98–106.

101. Pol Pot, “Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot,” 70–71.

102. “Four-Year Plan,” 96–98.

103. “*Dan’ Pativatt* (December 1977–January 1978), special issue, 23. DCCAM, No. D21432.

104. Mertha, *Brothers in Arms*, 49–50.

105. “Four-Year Plan,” 46.

106. Etcheson, *Rise and Demise of Democratic Kampuchea*, 214.

107. David Chandler and Ben Kiernan, “Preface,” in Chandler, Kiernan, and Boua, *Pol Pot Plans the Future*, xiii, xvi.

108. Samphan, “L’économie du Cambodge et ses problèmes d’industrialisation,” 82–83, 193. Etcheson notes that the Super Great Leap took Samphan’s dissertation’s proposals to new extremes. Etcheson, *Rise and Demise of Democratic Kampuchea*, 212–213.

109. “Four-Year Plan,” 46; and Norodom Sihanouk, *War and Hope: The Case for Cambodia*, trans. Mary Feeney (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 86. In 1975, Mao met with Le Duan and stated in response to Le’s admission that Vietnam could not have done the same as the CPK in radically making the transition to socialism: “No. We couldn’t do it either.” Mao Zedong, “Transcript of Mao’s Meeting with Le Duan,” Beijing, 24 September 1975.

110. “Four-Year Plan,” 46.

111. “Excerpted Report on the Leading Views of the Comrade Representing the Party Organization at a Zone Assembly,” *Dan’ Pativatt* (1976), in Chandler, Kiernan, and Boua, *Pol Pot Plans the Future*, 29.

112. Francois Poncheaud, *Cambodia: Year Zero* (New York: Henry Holt, 1978), 70, quoting *Bratei Cheat* [Nation], 10 June 1976.

113. “Four-Year Plan,” 45.

114. “Four-Year Plan,” 107.

115. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 245–246.

116. Radio Phnom Penh, 28 September 1977, translated by BBC SWB, 1 October 1977, Far East 5629/C2/1 ff.

117. *Dan’ Pativatt* 6 (June 1977): 4–9, DCCAM, No. D21421. See also Meng-Try Ea, *The Chain of Terror: The Khmer Rouge Southwest Zone Security System* (Phnom Penh: Documentation Center of Cambodia, 2005).

118. Pol Pot, “Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot,” 76.
119. Hinton, *Man or Monster?*, 114.
120. Steve R. Heder, “Khieu Samphan and Pol Pot: Moloch’s Poodle” (working paper, Australia National University, September 1990), 1–7. Samphan consistently denied doing such despite the fact that he was chairman of Office 870, which oversaw mass killings. On his denial, see *L’histoire récente du Cambodge et mes prises de position*, 67–68.
121. “Four-Year Plan,” 46.
122. Paul Healy, “A Paragon of Marxist Orthodoxy: Mao Zedong on the Social Formation and Social Change,” in Dirlik, Healy, and Knight, *Critical Perspectives on Mao Zedong’s Thought*, 120. Healy refers to Mao’s perspective as “fundamentally similar to that found in the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin.” Mao scholars, he urges, ought to “realize that the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution were not irrational utopian ‘orgies’ but attempts to transform the economic base and superstructure in line with the requirements Mao and his contemporaries identified in the level of development of the productive forces.” Healy, “A Paragon of Marxist Orthodoxy: Mao Zedong on the Social Formation and Social Change,” in Dirlik, Healy, and Knight, *Critical Perspectives on Mao Zedong’s Thought*, 144–145.
123. Pol Pot, “Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot,” 55; and Locard, *Pol Pot’s Little Red Book*, 32.
124. Kiernan, *Blood and Soil*, 28–29, 543–544.
125. Laurence Picq, *Beyond the Horizon: Five Years with the Khmer Rouge* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1989), 97–98.
126. Kiernan, *Pol Pot Regime*, 58.
127. Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 2, 462.
128. Short, *Pol Pot*, 25. On the temple complex, see Edwards, *Cambodge*, 5–7, 19–39, 242.
129. Kiernan, *Blood and Soil*, 28–29, 543–544.
130. Yuvajan Yuvanāri Paṭivatt, 4.
131. Ben Kiernan, “Orphans of Genocide: The Cham Muslims of Kampuchea under Pol Pot,” *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 20, no. 4 (1988): 2–33; and Ysa, *Cham Rebellion*, 19–52.
132. Thayer, “My Education,” 21. Pol Pot’s postmortem reveals that he was suspicious of Vietnamese designs to seize Khmer lands, hence his mention of Kampuchea Krom, which was host to vast Vietnamese settlement in the seventeenth century under Khmer king Chey Chetha II (1576–1628) and became part of Vietnam after French colonization. Ministère des Affaires Étrangères du Kampuchéa Démocratique, *Livre Noir*, 6–7.
133. Ministère des Affaires Étrangères du Kampuchéa Démocratique, *Livre Noir*, 18–19, 21.
134. Ministère des Affaires Étrangères du Kampuchéa Démocratique, *Livre Noir*, 9n1; and *Dañ’ Paṭivatt* 7 (July 1978): 1, DCCAM, No. D14579.
135. Mertha, *Brothers in Arms*, 1–19, 56–76.
136. Morris, *Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia*, 94–98.
137. *Dañ’ Paṭivatt* (May–June 1978): 6–7, 18, DCCAM, No. D21428.
138. BBC SWB, “Cambodia’s Strategy of Defence against Vietnam,” 15 May 1978, FE/5813/A3/1; *Dañ’ Paṭivatt* (December 1977–January 1978), special issue, 10, 12, 18, DCCAM, No. D21432.

139. Although Mao-era CCP leaders never explicitly targeted ethnic minorities in their speeches, certain CCP policies did affect ethnic minorities negatively. See Wemheuer, *A Social History of Maoist China*, 38–50. See also Angel Ryono and Matthew Galway, “Xinjiang under China: Reflections on the Multiple Dimensions of the 2009 Urumqi Uprising,” *Asian Ethnicity* 16, no. 2 (2015): 240–241.

140. Ministère des Affaires Étrangères du Kampuchéa Démocratique, *Livre Noir*, 6.

141. David Chandler, “An Anti-Vietnamese Rebellion in Early Nineteenth Century Cambodia: Pre-colonial Imperialism and a Pre-nationalist Response,” *Journal of South-east Asian Studies* 6, no. 1 (March 1975): 9.

142. Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 458.

143. *Dan’ Pativatt* 7 (July 1978): 1–2, DCCAM, No. D17470 (emphasis added).

144. *Dan’ Pativatt* (April 1977): 1–2, DCCAM, No. D21427.

145. Tyner, *Killing of Cambodia*, 116. A secret CPK document concedes that it received “some Chinese aid, but there is not very much compared [with] other countries. “Four-Year Plan,” 47.

146. On CPK ignorance of steel, iron ore, or coal development, see Margolin, “Cambodge,” 683–688. On CPK industrialization propaganda, see “Kampuchéa Démocratique en Marche” [Democratic Kampuchea on the march], August 1977, NAC, No. B685, 1–58.

147. Ponchaud, *Cambodia: Year Zero*, 86. On Cambodian yields before DK, see Remy Prud’homme, *L’économie du Cambodge*, 75; and Zhou Deshou, “Jianpuzhai wangguo jingji jianshe qingkuang,” 43–44.

148. “Four-Year Plan,” 89.

149. “Four-Year Plan,” 46.

150. Ervin Staub, *The Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 192.

151. Sihanouk recalled Pol Pot saying to him that “if there are sugar palm trees, the soil is Khmer. . . . We must occupy” Chau Doc and Ha Tien in An Giang and Kien Giang provinces (Vietnam). Norodom Sihanouk, “Speech at the Asia Society,” New York, 22 February 1980.

152. Ben Kiernan, “Kampuchea and Stalinism,” in *Marxism in Asia*, ed. Colin Mackerras and Nick Knight (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 235.

153. Locard, *Pol Pot’s Little Red Book*, 70.

154. “Preliminary Explanation before Reading the Plan, by the Party Secretary,” Party Center, 21 August 1976, in Chandler, Kiernan, and Boua, *Pol Pot Plans the Future*, 121. See also Chandler, *Brother Number One*, 114.

155. Locard, *Pol Pot’s Little Red Book*, 73.

156. Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 3. S-21 currently houses large, concrete Mao-style busts of Pol Pot, a symbol of CPK designs to develop a personality cult not unlike Chairman Mao’s in the Cultural Revolution.

157. “Four-Year Plan,” 113.

158. Ponchaud, *Cambodia: Year Zero*, 70.

159. Soizick Crochet, *Le Cambodge* [Cambodia] (Paris: Editions Karthala, 1997), 115.

160. Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 76.

161. On “comrade ox,” see Pin Yathay, *Stay Alive, My Son*, 171; and Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 222.

162. Lewis Siegelbaum, *Stakhanovism and the Politics of Productivity in the USSR, 1935–1941* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 66–98; and Richard Overy, *The Dictators: Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), 258.

163. “Ni Zhifu tongzhi shengping” [The life of comrade Ni Zhifu], *Xinhuashe* [Xinhua News Agency (China)], *RMRB*, 2/3 May 2013, <http://politics.people.com.cn/n/2013/0503/c1001-21348753.html>. On model workers in Maoist China, see James Farley, *Model Workers in China, 1949–1965: Constructing a New Citizen* (London: Routledge, 2019). For a similar phenomenon around Communist cultural icon Lei Feng, see Louise Edwards, “Military Celebrity in China: The Evolution of ‘Heroic and Model Servicemen,’” in *Celebrity in China*, ed. Elaine Jeffreys and Louise Edwards (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2010), 21–44.

164. See Sen, “Knuñ sabhābkar(ñ) paccuppanneñ trūvghoeñ oy cpās’ nūvsaī āramm(ñ) puggalīniyam hoey ptejñā vāy kamdec oy dān’belvelā”; and “Letter of Honorary Red Flag from Communist Party of Kampuchea’s Central Committee to Male and Female Cadres and All Cooperative Farmers in the Districts of Prasot (Eastern Zone), Kampong Tralach (Western Zone), and Tram Kak (Southwest Zone),” trans. Bunsou Sour, DCCAM, 30 June 1977, http://www.dccam.org/Archives/Documents/Red_Flag/Red_Flag_Honoray_to_Central_Committee.htm.

165. Carney, “Continuity in Cambodian Communism,” in Carney, *Communist Party Power in Kampuchea*, 11.

166. Sarin, *Srañoh Prālīn Khmer*, 48. Quoted in Carney, “Continuity in Cambodian Communism,” 11.

167. Sarin, *Srañoh Prālīn Khmer*, 86.

168. Hinton, *Why Did They Kill?*, 29.

169. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 170–171, 215.

170. Locard, *Pol Pot’s Little Red Book*, 112, 143–144.

171. “Four-Year Plan,” 113.

172. *Dañ’ Paṭivatt* (December 1977–January 1978), special issue, 11. DCCAM, No. D21432.

173. *Dañ’ Paṭivatt* (April 1977), 9, DCCAM, No. D21427 (emphasis added).

174. “Four-Year Plan,” 118.

175. “Four-Year Plan,” 113–118.

176. Harris, *Buddhism in a Dark Age*, 43–44, 63.

177. Pol Pot, “Discours prononcé par le camarade Pol Pot,” 31.

178. Charles Keyes, “Communist Revolution and the Buddhist Past in Cambodia,” in Keyes, Kendall, and Hardacre, *Asian Visions of Authority*, 56. See also Chhean Kong, “On Buddhism and Psychotherapy,” in *Not Just Victims: Conversations with Cambodian Community Leaders in the United States*, ed. Sucheng Chan Audrey U. Kim, int. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 77.

179. Judy Ledgerwood, “Ritual in 1990 Cambodian Political Theater,” in *At the Edge of the Forest: Essays on Cambodia, History, and Narrative in Honor of David Chandler*, ed. Anne Hansen and Judy Ledgerwood (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Southeast Asia Program, 2008), 204.

180. Chanthou Boua, “Genocide of a Religious Group: Pol Pot and Cambodia’s Buddhist Monks,” in *State-Organized Terror: The Case of Violent Internal Repression*, ed. P. Timothy Bushnell, Vladimir Schlapentokh, Christopher Vanderpool, and Jeyaratnam Sundram (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991), 236.

181. Justus M. van der Kroepf, “Cambodia: From ‘Democratic Kampuchea’ to ‘People’s Republic,’” *Asian Survey* 19, no. 8 (1979): 737.

182. Ledgerwood, “Ritual in 1990 Cambodian Political Theater,” in Hansen and Ledgerwood, *At the Edge of the Forest*, 204.

183. “Four-Year Plan,” 116–117.

184. Short, *Pol Pot*, 159. On Meas’s Pracheachon connection, see Sorpong Peou, *Intervention & Change in Cambodia: Towards Democracy?* (Singapore: Institute of South-east Asian Studies, 2000), 113n73.

185. Stephen R. Heder, “Khmer Rouge Opposition to Pol Pot: ‘Pro-Vietnamese’ or ‘Pro-Chinese,’” in *Reflections of Cambodian Political History: Backgrounder to Recent Developments*, ed. Stephen R. Heder. (Canberra, ACT: Australia National University, Strategic and Defense Studies Centre, Working Paper No. 239, 1991), 8, quoting Keo Meas documents, 25 September 1976, 8–10.

186. Heder, “Khmer Rouge Opposition to Pol Pot,” in Heder, *Reflections of Cambodian Political History*, 8, quoting Keo Meas documents, 25 September 1976, 8–10.

187. Heder, “Khmer Rouge Opposition to Pol Pot,” in Heder, *Reflections of Cambodian Political History*, 8, quoting Keo Meas documents, 25 September 1976, 8–10.

188. Kiernan, *How Pol Pot Came to Power*, 420.

189. Mosyakov, “Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese Communists,” in Cook, *Genocide in Cambodia and Rwanda*, 54.

190. Ben Kiernan, “Introduction to ‘Planning the Past,’” in Chandler, Kiernan, and Boua, *Pol Pot Plans the Future*, 230–231.

191. Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 64–65.

192. Nim, “Planning the Past,” in Chandler, Kiernan, and Boua, *Pol Pot Plans the Future*, 293.

193. Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 64–65.

194. Nim, “Camlœy Hu Nim hau Phoas Krasouñ Ghosnākār am̐bi Pravatti Paks Se Aī Aā,” 1–51.

195. Chandler, *Voices from S-21*, 65.

196. Nim, “Planning the Past,” in Chandler, Kiernan, and Boua, *Pol Pot Plans the Future*, 317.

197. Locard, *Pol Pot’s Little Red Book*, 90.

198. Nim, “Camlœy Hu Nim hau Phoas Krasouñ Ghosnākār am̐bi Pravatti Paks Se Aī Aā,” 5.

199. Matthew Galway, “Permanent Revolution,” in Sorace, Franceschini, and Loubere, *Afterlives of Chinese Communism*, 184; and Knight, *Rethinking Mao*, 238.

200. *Dañ’ Paṭivatt* (September–October 1976), special issue, 33–97, DCCAM, No. D21757; and “Sharpen the Consciousness of the Proletarian Class to be as Keen and Strong as Possible,” 53, quoted in Kiernan, “External and Indigenous Sources of Khmer Rouge Ideology,” 200–201.

201. Schram, “Mao Tse-tung and the Theory of the Permanent Revolution,” 221–244.

202. *Peking Review*, 28 February 1975, 5, quoted in Tang, *Cultural Revolution and Post-Mao Reforms*, 120.

203. Jeldres, “Personal Reflection on Norodom Sihanouk and Zhou Enlai,” 61. There are no Chinese-language records of this visit. Jeldres’s personal communication

remains the only source speculating Zhang's role in this capacity. Andrew Mertha discusses Zhang's April 1976 secret visit "to assess the situation in the country" but does not mention his drafting DK's new constitution. Mertha, *Brothers in Arms*, 6, citing a 31 December 2012 interview in Phnom Penh.

204. On human liver eating in China, see Gang Yue, *The Mouth That Begs: Hunger, Cannibalism, and the Politics of Eating in Modern China* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999); and Zheng Yi, *Scarlet Memorial: Tales of Cannibalism in Modern China*, ed. and trans. T. P. Sym (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996).

205. Chandler, *Tragedy of Cambodian History*, 1.

Conclusion

1. Xi Jinping, "Carry on the Enduring Spirit of Mao Zedong Thought," in *The Governance of China*, 31.

2. See Hu Hanmin, "Minzu guoji yu disanguoji" [International of nationalities and the Third Communist International], in *Hu Hanmin shijiziliao huiji* [The works of Hu Hanmin], ed. Hu Hanmin (Cuncui xueshe, Xianggang: Dadong tushu gongsi, 1980), 4:1395–1401. See also Anna Belogurova, "The Chinese International of Nationalities: The Chinese Communist Party, the Comintern, and the Foundation of the Malayan National Communist Party, 1923–1939," *Journal of Global History* 9 (2014): 451.

3. This theme in Mao's thought has been covered by Wakeman, *History and Will*; Schram, *Political Thought of Mao Zedong*; and Maurice Meisner, *Mao Zedong: A Political and Intellectual Portrait* (Cambridge: Polity, 2007).

4. Xi, "Carry on the Enduring Spirit of Mao Zedong Thought," in *The Governance of China*, 29.

5. Mark Selden, *The Yen'an Way* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), 276.

6. Amina Smith, *Thought Reform and China's Dangerous Classes: Reeducation, Resistance, and the People* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012), 18, 98–99. See also Odoric Wou, *Mobilizing the Masses: Building Revolution in Henan* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994); and Ralph Thaxton, *Salt of the Earth: The Political Origins of Peasant Protest and Communist Revolution in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

7. Smith, *Thought Reform and China's Dangerous Classes*, 99. See also Mark Selden, *China in Revolution: The Yen'an Way Revisited* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1995), 243; Chen, *Making Revolution*, 520; and Schram, *Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*, 97–98.

8. Timothy Cheek, "Mao, Revolutionary, and Memory," in Cheek, *A Critical Introduction to Mao*, 13.

9. Xi, "Carry on the Enduring Spirit of Mao Zedong Thought," in *The Governance of China*, 31.

10. Xi, "Carry on the Enduring Spirit of Mao Zedong Thought," in *The Governance of China*, 27, citing Mao Zedong, "Reform Our Study," in *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), 3:22.

11. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 173.

12. Locard, *Pol Pot's Little Red Book*, 112–113, 136.

13. Kuhn, "Origins of the Taiping Vision," 366.

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Cujas Library (Bibliothèque interuniversitaire Cujas), Paris
CV Starr East Asian Library, University of California, Berkeley
Documentation Center of Cambodia (Majjhamaṇḍal Eksār Kampuchea, DCCAM), Phnom Penh
East China Normal University Libraries (Huadong shifan daxue tushuguan), Shanghai
Harvard Yenching Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts
National Archives of Cambodia (Paṇṇasār Tṭhānjāti Kampuchea/ Archives Nationales du Cambodge, NAC), Phnom Penh
National Library of Australia, Canberra
National Overseas Archives (Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer, ANOM), Aix-en-Provence
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